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THE

PERSONAL ADVENTURES

OF

"OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT" IN ITALY.

38344

SHOWING

HOW AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGNER CAN FIND GOOD QUARTERS WHEN OTHER MEN LIE IN THE FIELDS; GOOD DINNERS WHILST MANY ARE HALF STARVED; AND GOOD WINE, THOUGH THE KING'S STAFF BE REDUCED TO HALF RATIONS.

By MICHAEL BURKE HONAN.

These volumes are original, and not a reprint or *resumé* of my correspondence from Italy to the 'Times.'

IN TWO VOLS.—VOL. II.

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Notice is hereby given, that the Author of "Personal Adventures of 'Our Own Correspondent' in Italy" reserves to himself the right of publishing an edition, and also a translation, in France.

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THE PERSONAL ADVENTURES

OF

"OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT."

CHAPTER I.

VALLEGGIO (*continued*).

PADRE ANTONIO became a constant visitor in my room, and whenever nothing more lively was to be had, we made long walking excursions together on the hills overlooking the Mincio, or along the pathway by the river's side. He was to be sure a little heavy on hand, and rather given to telling long stories; but I found he had plenty of common sense, a store of classical learning, a perfect acquaintance with the local history, and above all, a rare appreciation of his countrymen, the *Prodi* Italians.

He one day called on me, and, taking the precaution of locking the chamber-door, said he was about to give me the strongest proof of the confidence that he and the honest grocer, his brother, had in

my discretion and perceptive qualities, by asking my advice in a most difficult emergency.

In fact, the grocer had in *Casa* no less than 1500 gold Napoleons—all his worldly wealth—and as he was convinced that the Austrians must one day or the other come back, and Valleggio possibly be sacked, he was at a loss to know how to dispose of his money, so as to secure it against all contingencies; amongst which the chance of some of the Piedmontese soldiers billeted on him, misconducting themselves, was not omitted.

He, the Padre, proposed to send it, or rather take it himself, to Milan, and leave it in deposit with a brother priest; whilst the grocer was of opinion, that the best course was to bury it in one of the fields of a small farm he held in the neighbourhood.

In this dilemma, as they would not venture to trust the secret to any one resident in the village, not even to the parish priest, they agreed to refer the case to me, and follow implicitly my advice.

I suggested the simple expedient of investing the money in the English funds, but Don Antonio with all his wisdom could not understand me. Stock operations were altogether unknown in that quarter, and his brother could only comprehend that his money existed, when he saw the pretty yellow boys before him; or the groceries, that when trade was safe, represented them; or when he could put his foot on the piece of ground beneath which they lay concealed.

"In that case, Don Antonio," I said, "you must not take your money to Milan, for though your *confrère* may be an honest man, you cannot answer for his every hour's discretion, and grave troubles will yet be seen there as the liberals are already at work: neither must you bury it in an open field, as you may be watched whilst so doing, and you cannot maintain a constant guard. Depend on it, *Caro Padre*, in case of a reverse, the Piedmontese will not be caught on this side of a broad river, they will place the Mincio and a broken bridge between them and the pursuers, and the Austrians will walk into an evacuated town that offers no armed opposition, as quietly as you came into this room; therefore tell Don Pepino that I counsel him and you, in the dead of night, when all the world is asleep, to dig a deep hole in the cellar floor, in that part usually covered by wine casks, measure exactly the locality, be careful to remove all traces of the earth being newly turned, and there leave the golden pippins. Your brother or you only visit the wine-vaults; neither of you is at home morning, noon, and night; you apprehend nothing from your own servants; the Piedmontese soldiers are invariably well-conducted; and if the Austrians do come back, no defence of the village being made, they will enter like lambs, and pass the Mincio at once in pursuit of a defeated enemy. It is better, as we say in Ireland, 'to weep over your money than cry after it;' so be of good cheer, your treasure is all safe."

The good Padre said that I spoke like a printed book, and when I last heard from Valleggio, Don Pepino's shop was flourishing, and therefore I infer my advice was followed.

The village of Valleggio was filled with young men fit for active service, but though they all spoke very loud at the café, or went from house to house with a musket on the shoulder, I don't believe that one ever came under fire during the whole campaign.

The heats of summer had set in, and all the relaxing influence of an Italian climate was felt by them. I had some difficulty myself to bear up against the dangerous languor, but as I walked, rode, or drove several miles every day, and filled up quires of paper innumerable for the "Times," the reader will see that I did not give way.

As to the natives, such was their laziness that no one had the courage to run his arms through the sleeves of his coat, and the youngsters went loitering along, with the jacket resting, as if by magnetic attraction, on their shoulders. How every man did gape, how every jaw was distended, till the sun went down, and then the lazy fit diminished, though much of its influence remained.

At noon all the world retired to sleep, and the streets were silent as the grave; but at four, the business of life was again commenced, and by six or seven the village promenade was in activity.

I often wondered on what fund these idle fellows lived, and how it came to pass that their parents

supported them without receiving the slightest assistance to the household in return, but I soon discovered that there is a real truth covered by an outward coating of folly, and that the watching and tending the silk-worm was just that lazy yet useful and necessary occupation suited to their moral and physical condition.

From the moment the *Bacchi*, out of little black grains of sand as they appear to be, develope their animate qualities, they require the most delicate care; the temperature of the room in which their beds are ranged must be kept at a certain heat, their food must be chopped to the size suited to their young and subsequently improved digestion; and due attention must be paid to the dryness of the leaf, and the period at which the portion to be given is increased.

As the whole wealth of the country is derived from no other source, it is easy to understand what incessant and minute care to the worm is required: but the laziest fool is as useful as the most active and intelligent of the parish, and I soon came to admire the bounty of that dispensation, which allotted the most languid occupation on earth to the most indolent race in the peninsula.

The condition of the Piedmontese troops, when the spring, or rather the summer advanced, became materially improved, as the abundance of timber enabled the soldiers to construct huts more elevated than canvas tents generally are, and the officers,

if no village was near, were housed in the same manner.

During the cold weather, and the constant showers with which the month of April was ushered in, the sufferings of all ranks were extreme, and I more than once wondered that a mutiny did not take place.

There were no tents, no cover of any kind, and the men had to lie down and sleep, if they could, on the damp ground, saturated with rain. The officer had some defence in the thickness of his great-coat, or the blankets he was able to buy; but he had no other means of getting rid of the accumulation of moisture than by cutting a trench along each side, as well as the extremities of the ground on which he lay, and allowing the water to drain into it.

Still not a complaint was heard, and all bore their hard lot patiently, in the belief that it would last only a few days, and that Verona or Mantua would ere long console them.

Another grievance began at this period to be felt, and that was the irregular supply and ill-managed delivery of provisions. Instead of bringing the rations to the men, the men had to go for their rations, and as the depôts of service were ten, fifteen, or twenty miles separate, you may imagine what extra labour fell upon the troops, particularly in this hot weather.

In vain the staff-officers complained, in vain

memorials were lodged at head-quarters, to the last hour the abuse was never remedied, and the great battle which sealed the fate of Charles Albert was lost because the Piedmontese troops were left without food for three days.

All this will be now denied, and it is really difficult to believe that such gross mismanagement did exist, but every word I say is true, and I ask the half-starved sufferers at Custoza to speak out.

The King had no commissariat, as we understand it, but whilst nothing was provided for the men, the soldier was strictly charged to respect the property of the people of the country; and I know that he did so under the most trying circumstances, and more than once where he knew that what he did not take would be carried off next day by the less scrupulous enemy.

The contractors for the army were realising, it was well known, immense sums, as the abundance of produce brought to them for sale exceeded all calculation, but though I have no doubt due quantities could be obtained, the service of delivery was so badly organised, that they never were to be found at the proper place, or where the troops were most in need.

Charles Albert thought he could go from Milan to Venice with a hop, step, and a jump, and it would seem as if he despised all the usual precautions taken by those who are not so flighty in their ideas.

I must return to Don Pietro and Donna Lucia, both of whom I left, I believe, sitting in company with the staff and the diplomatic corps, before the great door of their house, villa, or palace, as you may choose to call it. Don Pietro was not over pleased with my political views, and he was irritated that I did not give way to the general delusion, but Donna Lucia never failed to be my friend, because she argued, that the cousin of the great O'Connell could not think amiss.

I was also in favour, because of her two dear children I preferred the younger, that being also the mother's love. How the little creature used to wind her arms round the young matron's neck, and embrace her over and over, and how did the fond mama smile with delight at me, as she returned these caresses.

A child with greater promise of rich beauty I never saw, than Maria the elder, but the young coquette had a temper of her own, and it was not easy to please her when the sulky fit came on. In my philosophical investigations—hem! I have often sought to discover at what age the vanity of the female mind,—I am wrong, the desire to please,—given to the sex for such wise purposes, begins to be developed. From ten to twelve, or fourteen, was, I thought, a reasonable period, but I protest after my studies at Valleggio I opine that six or seven is the proper time.

Donna Lucia and I were one day talking wisdom

together, she holding on her knee the elder girl, whilst the younger played with my watch-chain, when I took it into my head to tell my hostess that she was both *bella* and *buona*, qualities as it is said, rarely united in the same person.

Donna Lucia denied the one, though she admitted the other, and was not displeased when I said that the former was a necessary consequence of the latter, the expression of goodness rendering a handsome face lovely.

Proceeding in this investigation, I asked Maria, which, when she grew up to be a great girl, she would like to be, *bella* or *buona ?* Maria refused to answer. I repeated the word, and the child blushed like a red rose.

"Ask her, Donna Lucia," I entreated, and Donna Lucia, fondling her first-born said :

"Do, dearest Maria, tell us which, when you are as old as I am, you would like to be ?"

The poor baby looked full into her tender mother's face, her eyes filled, and bursting into tears, she fell upon her bosom.

"Oh, *bella*, dear mama,—pray forgive me."

"Quite right," we both exclaimed ; and the mother kissed off the tears, letting fall a few of her own at the same time.

In this way, dear madam, I go through the world, talking wisdom to young mamas, teaching philosophy to young ladies, and chopping the flowers of rhetoric as they do mulberry leaves to seedling

Bacchi in Lombardy, for the use of *Bambini* even of six years old.

I never saw the pretty woman yet who was not good as well as handsome, but where ugliness or even plainness prevailed, I have rarely met the other quality alluded to. The pretty Maria had the true instinct of her sex, and I only wish that those who are older would tell the truth as frankly.

I met a person at Valleggio, who more than once crossed my path under circumstances that I fear excited strong doubt in my mind that he was nothing better than a spy, though he might have been in reality the character which he affected.

During the last civil war at Oporto, this same Belgian called on me, saying he understood I had some influence with the Junta, and praying my assistance to trace out a younger brother, who in a feigned name, he had reason to believe, on account of differences with his family, had enlisted as a common soldier.

I gave him all the aid in my power, and the Minister of War, and his secretaries, went over the muster-roll of the whole forces, and allowed him to go through the several barracks and inspect the men. No brother however was found, and, as I now suspect, no run-away of the name existed.

I found the same gentleman playing the same game in the *bureaux* of Marshal Saldanha at Lisbon, when Donna Maria was in the ascendancy, but the brother was not forthcoming, though his

relative searched for him in every voltigeur's knapsack.

What was my astonishment to meet him once more at Valleggio, going from general to general, from *aide-de-camp* to *aide-de-camp*, like Peter Schlemil in search of his lost shadow.

"What, sir," said I one day in presence of the Quartermaster-general, "have you not yet found that scion of your race, whom you looked for in the rival armies of the Junta and Donna Maria? Pray, sir, let us have his precise *signalement*."

The Belgian returned that night to Milan, and I resumed active operations.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAR.

THE siege of Peschiera was prosecuted with great vigour, so far as the destruction of the town and of the casemates went, but no effectual progress in the reduction of the place itself was made; and if the fortress had been sufficiently provisioned, it might have held out to the end of the campaign.

The old Croat commander entertained to the latest moment hopes that Radetzky would be able either to raise the siege, or throw in a convoy of supplies; and if he occasionally listened to the propositions made to him by Charles Albert, it was for the purpose of gaining a short interval of repose, or of protracting the siege to the latest possible period.

He knew that the desired convoy was in a state of readiness where the hills of the Tyrol touch the Lake of Garda, and that the Austrian Commander-in-chief meditated such a diversion as would probably compel the King to call off the investing troops.

Radetzky cannot be excused for having neglected to victual this important post with at least twelve months' supply before the Piedmontese sat down in form before it; but that blunder being committed, he did the best to repair it, and he prepared a great blow, which, if it had succeeded, would have not only relieved the fortress, but destroyed the Piedmontese army some weeks before its final overthrow.

Radetzky, whose forces were now considerably augmented by the arrival of fresh troops from Vienna, deliberated for some days on the possibility of turning the royal positions, and of marching directly on Milan. He was undecided whether he should pierce the left centre of our line from Verona, as he subsequently so effectually did, or, starting with his whole force from Mantua, march by the Valley of the Po, and leave the enemy to follow as he could.

He decided on the latter course, and with an effrontery far different from his usual caution, began to pass large masses of men from Verona to Mantua by the direct road of Isola della Scala, instead of the longer route by Legnago hitherto used.

To conceal, however, his project, he sent troops in both directions, so that the King, who was to the last badly served by his spies, and never by the peasantry, was ignorant whether the bulk of the enemy's forces was held at Verona, or at Mantua, and as he himself was in force on the line of hills at only eight miles distance from the great fortress, he

concluded that his attention should alone be fixed on that important place.

Nothing that occurred during the campaign irritated the weak monarch so much as Radetzky's having been allowed to pass with impunity between the two cities by the direct road, within pistol-shot almost of his own positions. He called it "walking on his mustachios," and was furious whenever the subject was mentioned.

At length the Austrian Commander-in-chief's plan began to be developed, and unfortunately the first blow fell on those who least merited it, and who were most incapable of resisting.

I have shown you ere this, that Charles Albert, as his enemies said, desirous of appropriating to himself the whole honour of winning the independence of Italy, had either discouraged the arrival of Tuscan, Roman, or Neapolitan troops, or allowed them to take no part in the great operations; and that the contingent of the former, which had actually joined, was isolated, or rather abandoned, on the extreme right of our line at Curtatone, a few miles distant from Mantua.

This division of 5000 or 6000, commanded by General Langier, had resisted several minor assaults with the most determined bravery, and in every instance had repulsed the enemy. The King being aware that it would be again attacked, sent orders to Langier, some say to hold good, and that a sufficient force would be brought up to support him,

whilst others assert that he was instructed to close in to the left, and join himself to the Piedmontese.

Langier stood still, as he declares that such were the commands he received; but his division was annihilated by troops three times numerically his superior, and with artillery, in which arm he was limited to eight small pieces.

This fatal blow was struck on the 28th or 29th of May, and the remnant of the brave but unfortunate Tuscans fled to Brescia, where they were received with open arms, on account not only of the well-earned laurels they had won at Curtatone, but for their choice Italian, which formed such a pleasing contrast to the rough provincial dialect spoken in that quarter.

I have heard some of those young men speak in raptures of the kindness as well as hospitality of the Bresciani, and so grateful was it to them that I fancy very few indeed returned to the Mincio.

Radetzky, believing that Charles Albert, on hearing that his right wing was thus completely turned, would have hurried off the troops investing Peschiera, to make head against him, ordered the convoy I mentioned to march upon Peschiera; but as no alteration in the dispositions of the siege was made, the escort could not get beyond Calmasino, a little way at this side from the celebrated Plateau of Rivoli, and the brave Croat, reduced to his last biscuit, had to give way.

The most honorable terms were allowed him, the

only condition, I believe, exacted being, that neither he nor any of his men should serve in Italy during the rest of that campaign.

I visited Peschiera two or three days after its surrender, and not a single house had a roof entire, and the poor inhabitants were indebted to the pity of the officer in command for shelter beneath the casemates. The town was literally a heap of ruins; but few lives were lost, as the cover proved to be tolerably substantial. The survivors now drove a busy trade; taverns and wine-shops were got up in a trice; and the charms of present gain compensated for past sorrows.

Had Radetzky followed up this blow with the 35,000 men he now drew out from Mantua, by falling on our right, we should have been placed in a most critical position—but he delayed twenty-four hours, and in that time Charles Albert so reinforced his admirable position at Goito and Volta, that the grand purpose of the Austrian completely failed.

During the day and the night, regiment after regiment passed through Valleggio, and crossed the Mincio at the Borghetto, and on the morning of the 30th a most respectable battle front was presented, inferior in force by from 5000 to 10,000 men to the enemy, but determined to sustain the reputation of Pastrengo, and repair the disaster of Santa Lucia.

The battle now delivered was called in the Gazette, the affair of Goito, but as so many fights took place in the same quarter, I call it that of

Sacca, a village on which much of the brunt of the action fell.

The Piedmontese left touched the river at Goito, its centre crossed the high road from Brescia to Mantua, but the right was too much extended, and the low grounds on which it lay, were disconnected from the range of hills where the main body of the army stood. The reserve was stationed at each side of the high road to Volta, and altogether the position was so good, that nothing short of a much superior force could derange it.

As Radetzky had the talent of concealing nearly all his movements from the King, no one in our camp could tell what had become of him. We knew he was in force at no great distance, but though light troops were thrown out on several points, no intelligence was actually received.

Even at mid-day on the 30th, no enemy was in sight, and the King, imagining that Radetzky's *coup* had failed, and that he had gone back to Mantua, turned his horse's head to Volta, and orders were given to more than one regiment, to fall out and cover that important elevation.

Charles Albert was just entering the town of Volta, when the sound of firing struck his ear; in an instant he was galloping to his old station, as usual in the front line, and the troops that fortunately had not moved beyond a certain distance, went into place again, and the action commenced.

The same grievous fault was committed by both

captains; the King remained for the greater part of the day without the co-operation of his right,—and Radetzky lost the use of a corps of 10,000 men, which he detached from his left for the purpose of outflanking it. The whole weight of the action fell on the left and centre of our line, and the great loss suffered by Radetzky was sustained by his right, who five times attacked, and were as often beaten off in that direction.

The Piedmontese artillery, stationed on a causeway which commanded the whole country to the river side, did terrific execution. Nothing could resist its concentrated fire, and the Austrian troops refused to move in the direction where its action was most felt.

Radetzky, it was said, during this critical period of the fight, was about to throw a flying-bridge over the Mincio, above Goito, for the purpose of passing a division which should take our victorious left in flank; and General Bava, believing this idle tale, still further weakened his force, by detaching a body of men to oppose him.

No such thing was attempted, nor was it probable; and far better it would have been if Bava had changed the defence of Goito into an attack on the Austrian right, and sent it reeling against the centre. The artillery, which held the causeway, had only to point its guns a little more to the right, and grave consequences must have been the result; but the Piedmontese officer was slow, and he knew not the

art of extracting all possible advantages from an unexpected success.

The Piedmontese, victorious on this side, were on the point of being absolutely defeated at the other extremity of the line, and if the Austrian had had the additional weight of the troops he had detached in the morning, the result would have been fatal.

A battalion, the third in order of battle from the extreme right, seized with a sudden panic, gave up the ground it occupied, and the Austrians, rapidly filling in the void, by a well-directed fire on the flank of the position, threw several battalions into disorder. The second line advanced to their support, but the Austrians still maintained their advantage, and the aspect of affairs was becoming desperate.

Even the third line was compromised, and a defeat was almost certain, when the Duke of Savoy, putting himself at the head of a brigade of guards, and the brigade of Savoy, exclaiming, "*A moi, à moi, les gardes et Savoie!*" rushed rapidly forward, and checked the enemy.

Still all this gallantry would have been useless, had not fifty pieces of artillery made a kind of steeple-chase from the left centre to the right, and, fortunately finding a position on which they could be displayed, poured in such close and destructive volleys, that nothing could resist them, and the Germans only thought how they could get out of the way.

When I say "steeple-chasing," I assure you it is no exaggeration: wherever a horse could leap the drivers sprung each pair at it, and the gun and wheels came rattling after. I have seen some artillery practice, but I never saw anything like this, and an Irish fox-chase over double ditches and four-foot stone walls, could only be compared to it; going over the wall or going through it being all the same.

Well may Piedmont be proud of the illustrious Prince who now fills the throne; on that day he saved the honour of its arms, and to his personal bravery, exhibited at the critical moment, supported by the guards and the never-failing division of Savoy, and terrific energy of the artillery, was the victory of Sacca owing.

At seven o'clock, Radetzky made up his mind that for this day all hope of success was at an end, and the cheer which rang over the hills, occupied by the Piedmontese, for the surrender of Peschiera, then announced to the whole army, convincing him that now his enemy was invincible, he ordered a general retreat, and the whole line retired not so far as Mantua, but to the positions which he had previously marked out, and intrenched.

Though the enterprise failed, the alarm it created did not subside for many days; foraging parties of Austrians were seen in all the villages within twenty miles of the camp, and the Brescians again built up their barricades.

I was not believed when I wrote to the "Times" that Radetzky aimed at nothing less than the re-conquest of Milan, and that if the first blow succeeded, it was necessary I should not be caught within the Austrian lines, for Radetzky would have sent me to Verona, or to Vienna, out of harm's way, and of the post-office.

Fortune now offered Charles Albert another chance still more favourable than that previously rejected at Pastrengo; but, as usual, the uncertain monarch refused the gift, and lost the most precious time in absurd displays at Peschiera, which should have been occupied in turning the Austrian right, and marching with his whole force on the lower Adige.

Instead of following a plan indicated by the position of Radetzky, the necessity of the campaign, and the most superficial knowledge of the art of war, it was not I believe even taken into consideration, and the King, finding that Radetzky still held the same intrenched ground, with the intention as he presumed of renewing the attack, brought down nearly his whole army to Volta, resolved to place the fate of Italian independence on one decisive battle, and if the enemy refused to leave his covered positions, to attack him in them.

For this purpose no less than 48,000 men, with nearly 100 pieces of cannon, were drawn up on the high grounds between Goito and Volta, with a *morale* so much improved in consequence of the victory of

the 30th, and the fall of Peschiera, that nothing short of a complete triumph could be anticipated.

As I had procured a written order to examine the lines even to the outposts of the Bersaglieri, I paid a visit in the afternoon of the 3rd of June, to every part of the camp, and was delighted with the order in which all things were arranged.

The day was lovely—the troops seemed prepared more for a military gala than a blood-stained fight, and as the sun shone on the waving plumes of the lancers, the brilliant uniform of the guards, and the brass guns of the artillery, polished with as much care as for an inspection, a grander spectacle could not be presented.

The ground chosen was one gentle ascent from the Valley of the Po, to the romantic village of Volta crowning the steep, and it was beautiful to see the regularity with which each battalion held the proper place, the uniformity of the line relieved by the batteries destined to protect it, or by the cavalry intended to follow up its success.

The officer who showed me over the ground was delighted with my admiration, but he cooled my enthusiasm by saying, that though the plan of battle was as perfect as if Napoleon or Wellington had designed it, the whole would fall into inextricable confusion in case of a reverse.

As long as each arm had to fight in an assigned position, every man would do his duty with the utmost gallantry; but let the enemy turn or break

the line, the whole would fall back together, and, unless by a miracle, such as occurred on the 30th, order could not be restored.

"An army thus drawn up," he said, "is something like a horse thrown back upon his haunches; there is no freedom of action, and if the hand that holds the reins falters, the steed and the battalions are equally at a loss."

I contended that each general of division was master of his own movements, and that he would take care to regulate the space required for any possible evolution.

"Lord help your innocent head," was the reply, —"but let us be moving; Radetzky must soon be seen."

I had my own private opinion on the probability of the wily Field-Marshal's re-appearance in the field, and so I pushed on to the most advanced posts of the Bersaglieri; there I found the silence of the grave, the men laid down, their pieces by them, and the videttes on their knees watching over the long grass, or behind the mulberry trees for Austrian bayonets.

I crept slowly from one to another, asking in low whispers where the enemy was.

"Behind those bushes—close to that wall—not far from that hedge," was the low-spoken reply.

"Bah!" said "Our Own," "not a Tedescho is there—a breath of air; the rustling of a leaf, the flight of a frightened bird, would indicate that life was stirring in the vicinity."

So back again I went to the main line, having made up my mind that Radetzky again had given us the slip, and at that hour was snug in Mantua, probably strengthening his garrison at Legnago on the Adige, lest Charles Albert might, as he should have done, make a dash that way. The 47,000 or 50,000 men remained under arms all night; the King, who had returned from Peschiera, having ordered the attack to be commenced at break of day.

Between four and five, whilst the cold night and the young dawn were struggling in the east, up sprang La Marmora and his gallant Bersaglieri, and forward they all ran to the bushes, the hedge rows, and low stone walls, where the Austrian Jägers might have been,—but, alas! "from the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step," the enemy had vanished from twelve to twenty-four hours previously, and not the ghost of a Tedescho was to be seen.

The King, furious on hearing this intelligence, insisted that Radetzky had only broken ground that morning, and he ordered the pursuit to be closely followed up; and so it was—the first division running, as I may say, a drag to the very entrenchments which the Field-Marshal had so well prepared, but which he now, bent on other plans, unhesitatingly abandoned.

His foraging parties were called in, all idea of marching on Milan in that direction was given up, and Charles Albert took possession of the stockades and stones, as the sole trophies of a great victory.

The Piedmontese lost 1500 men from the 30th to the 3rd, the Austrians at least double that number in the affairs of Curtatone and of Sacca, the great damage being sustained on his right in his vain attempts to turn our left at Goito.

The superiority of the Piedmontese artillery over that of the German was most remarkable, and the tremendous havoc it made that day in the enemy's lines, was a constant subject of admiration in all our *réunions* to the end of the campaign.

CHAPTER III.

THE WAR (*continued*).

THE Piedmontese officers on whom the mortifying duty devolved of walking after Radetzky, to a reasonable distance from Mantua, gave me a most deplorable account of the sufferings of the poor peasantry on the whole line of the retreat.

I do not mean to say that the Austrians personally ill-used them, or that the licentiousness which too often prevails in war was permitted on this occasion, but universal pillage was tolerated, and all the live stock, as well as grain and fodder in store, was carried off.

The people, who saw more clearly than the King what the result of the campaign must be, stood, however, in such awe of their habitual masters, that they scarcely dared to complain, and on the subject of information they were obstinately silent.

Many instances are recorded of their pusillanimity or supposed attachment to the Austrians, but I soon

came to understand that the peasantry had no confidence in Charles Albert, and that in fact the compact between landlord and tenant, under which they till then lived, was so favourable to them, they had no desire to change.

The Austrians won by terror all that the Piedmontese lost by forbearance, and a German order to send in so many rations, for which no payment was promised, was more readily attended to, than the Italian request with a more than reasonable hope of the value being realised.

I am very unwilling to charge on Radetzky, or the general officers under his ommand, all these barbarities; but as I saw what had been done at Castel Nuovo, I cannot resist the testimony of my own eyes, and as all witnesses were agreed on the manner in which the country was swept, I may not refuse the evidence laid before me.

The Austrians had no excuse, for good relations existed between them and the rural population at all periods, and it was only in the great commercial cities where they were held in detestation. Still I am forced to admit that mild measures were not those which moved the people of Lombardy or Venetia, and the rattle of an Austrian sabre on a table produced a dinner, which our officers could not get without long entreaty, though payment was never refused.

Every movement of Charles Albert was observed, and notice instantly carried to Mantua or Verona,

whereas our spies served us with evident reluctance, and the peasantry were deaf and blind.

We were, no doubt, *insouciant* at head-quarters, and more bent on arranging petty intrigues than on following up the enemy, whereas Radetzky was incessant in his demands for information, and liberally paid those who furnished it. I do not believe that we had a single traitor near the King, though I have often heard that libellous assertion made; but the Austrian Field-Marshal seemed to have an intuitive knowledge of our plans, and was in every instance, too well prepared to receive us.

It has been since stated that one of the chiefs of a free corps, who contrived to be ever hovering about that part of the army where head-quarters were, and, no doubt, often did good service by cutting off the enemy's supplies, or facilitating the passing of deserters, was during the whole campaign in Austrian pay, and in reality a strong case of suspicion was made out against him. Still we must not too easily credit reports against men's characters, and Radetzky divined, as a child might divine, the intentions of the King.

The strong straggling line which we occupied on the hills, extending from the Adige at Pastrengo to the Mincio at Goito, was open to inspection every hour, and not a battalion could be marched from one part to another, without its being observed by the ever-flying videttes, whereas the enemy moved on the concave segment of a circle from Verona, by

Legnago, to Mantua, and only the salient extremities could be examined, that examination being necessarily limited to the entrance or exit of so many men.

As to his plan of operations, Radetzky had nothing to conceal. He always boasted that he would collect the *prediale*, or land-tax, at Milan on the day on which it was annually paid, and that he only waited for sufficient reinforcements to take the offensive.

He said nothing about the anxiety which the hostile attitude of all the great cities, such as Vicenza and Padua, in his rear, gave him; but there, in reality, all his difficulty lay, as he was too prudent to abandon Verona and Mantua by a forward march, made necessarily with the bulk of the army, as long as the places I have named remained in the enemy's power.

No general can venture far from home without his rear being perfectly secure, and we shall soon see that before the Austrians' final *coup* came off against Charles Albert, he put Durando and all the minor fry who garrisoned the cities of the Venetia, *hors de combat*. In fact he swept off all the pawns, rooks, and knights, from the board before he developed his final manœuvre for giving checkmate, though he himself had been compelled to castle his king early in the game, and to stand on the defensive to the latest moment.

On the return of Charles Albert from the battle

of Sacca to Valleggio, we had a popular demonstration there. It was ten o'clock at night when the King and his suite appeared, and the members of the Provisional Government—for every village was then blessed with a Provisional Government—having stuck a few candles in their windows, the hint was taken up, and all those who had any interest to please the royal party ran about the streets crying "*fuori lumi*" (show light), and the people obeyed.

They did so, however, with reluctance, for I well knew that neither Charles Albert nor the Piedmontese, were popular, and nothing but fear induced many to comply.

We must tell truth, dear madam, though it may cost our life; and, as the only truth I know is the impression made on me, I give it, be it right or wrong.

A number of gentlemen, composed of some members of the diplomatic corps, Milanese agents, the Provisional Government, and army contractors, next met at the café, and a kind of procession was improvised. Flambeaux were procured, and a popular hymn selected to be sung in chorus, and thus arranged ten in front, and five deep, about fifty marched to the palace, which his Majesty occupied at the northern extremity of the village.

The sentinels at first resisted our entrance within the castle gates; but licence being procured we drew up in two lines before the palace, and there again roared out the exciting couplets. Then a

great cheer was heard, and tremendous vivas for Charles Albert, after which the word *piano* was passed from man to man, and all became silent, expecting the King's appearance in the balcony.

The King was in the sullens and would not appear, first because he suffered in mind by Radetzky's again escaping, and next because he thought that a regular illumination, and not a farthing-candle display should have been prepared; but one of the chamberlains stepped on the balcony, and very coolly told us to be quiet and go home to bed, as Charles Albert was more disposed to sleep than be kept awake by our unmelodious strains.

This was the substance of what the chamberlain said, though it was wrapped up in a courteous envelope, but none of us misunderstood the tone, and two of our diplomatic corps were enraged beyond measure that they had been present.

I had a long conversation with one of these gentlemen next day, in which I tried to pin him to the point, of what possible advantage the triumph of Charles Albert could be to him, or to his government; or rather to make him admit that he and his sovereign were working out their common ruin, by supporting the pretensions of a would-be conqueror, and master of the Italian crown.

But my diplomatist was as slippery as an eel, and I never could fix him to either an admission or denial. He had plenty to say, however, on the principle that speech is given to man to enable him to disguise his

thoughts, and so effectually does he avail himself of that advantage still, that though I knew him intimately well, and have had the pleasure of meeting him very often, I never could penetrate his reserve.

Our house was resplendent on this occasion, and the smell of grease and tallow hung about it for a week; but I do not think that Donna Lucia was well pleased, first on account of the derangement given to her household by the illumination, and next because the King did not personally return thanks.

Great men who aim at universal popularity have a difficult part to play, as the self-love of many is certain to be wounded on one occasion or other. Charles Albert lost that night more of popular good-will than he could afford, and the next day when he appeared with his usual rigid form on horseback, I did not hear a single cheer.

The ill-humour of Donna Lucia was still more increased by the reports—then only current, for news travelled slowly to us—that Pio Nono, the adored Pope, in whom implicit confidence had been placed, had refused to bless the war, or even sanction the co-operation of his troops. The medals with the likeness of the sacred Pontiff, which I had given to the two children, were removed from their necks, and a severe struggle began to take place between her religious and political feelings in the sensitive mind of the young mother.

The southern diplomatist, to whom I once alluded, was now taken into high favour, whilst my star was

evidently on the decline. He, a poet, an enthusiast, and a visionary patriot, deceived her and himself to the last hour, whilst I frankly owned that the Pope was perfectly in the right, and that the representative of peace and good-will on earth, could not conscientiously make war on a great Roman Catholic power, whose attachment and fidelity to the Church had never been suspected.

Padre Antonio supported my side of the question, as we both saw the King was leaning on a reed, but my sweet hostess would not be convinced either by her confessor or her friend, and she remained devoted to the Italian cause in spite of all the common sense we brought to bear against the poet and against Don Pietro, who clung to hope with tenacity, but who, I could see, did not like the progress of affairs.

The busy and agitated life I had hitherto led, was about this period relieved of much of its intensity, as nothing was doing at head-quarters, and my daily promenades along the line, brought home no materials for correspondence. The troops remained fixed in their positions, and the Austrians appeared in like manner to suffer from the same inertness.

At length notice was given that Radetzky was about to carry the great bulk of his forces, considerably strengthened by the addition of Welden's corps, to Vicenza and Padua, and that the people of Verona were determined to overpower the small

garrison of 2000 men that would be left there, and open the gates to Charles Albert.

Milanese agents were stationed at Villa Franca, who held an active correspondence with the Italian party in the place, and as the King lent a ready ear to anything like intrigue, he agreed to march fifty thousand men to a point selected, within three miles of Verona, and on the given signal to march against the gates, the guards of which would be easily disposed of by the conspirators.

I observed a vast deal of mystery, and hurrying to and fro, and I went over to Villa Franca to discover what it was all about, but the King had ordered the strictest secresy to be observed, and it was only the night before the experiment was to be tried, that I obtained a competent knowledge of the plan. I saw from the first it must fail, as Radetzky was not a man to abandon the great fortress for the purpose of reducing a secondary position like Vicenza, and that full measures of security would be taken for the one, whilst the other was carried by a *coup-de-main;* and on the night before the eventful morn, when everybody started from head-quarters in order to enter Verona at break of day, I announced my intention of going over to Villa Franca to see them *all come back.*

We subsequently knew that the King had, on the 7th of June, notice of Radetzky's intended march from Verona on the following morning, and now or never an important blow could have been struck.

Had Charles Albert marched boldly to the lower Adige, crossed the river between Verona and Legnago, which in the absence of the Austrians he could easily have done, and placed himself in position between Verona and Vicenza, the Field-Marshal would have been caught between two fires, with the King and 50,000 Piedmontese at one side, and Durango with 10,000 Romans, and diverse Italian contingents on the other.

The situation would have become most critical, as all that our army wished was to engage the enemy in open field; but Charles Albert did not contemplate such a bold and saving movement, and the utmost he could make up his mind to do, was to march towards Verona as he had promised.

But here again the evil star of the King prevailed, and though Radetzky was four days absent, we were not on the assigned ground till late on the night of the 12th, when the Austrian commander, no doubt fully informed of all Charles Albert's plans, had returned with at least 15,000 men, having only diverted the operations against Vicenza till he saw that complete success must be the result, and that his presence was no longer required.

At break of day, on the 13th, Charles Albert was at Alpo, within three miles of Verona, but what was his mortification when his secret agents came forth and told him that the hour had passed, and that as the Austrian garrison now amounted to 15,000, the people refused to rise.

Had the King appeared at the proper period, that is forty-eight hours sooner than he did, I have many reasons to believe that he might have entered Verona, as the conspiracy was well organised, and 2000 Tedeschi were not sufficient to keep it down, but the *troppo tardi* has been the bane of Italy at all times, and here its fatal influence was severely felt.

Within these four days two great chances had been offered to the King, both of which he most unaccountably neglected. Perhaps he had not sufficient military genius to attempt the first I have named, that of throwing himself on the high road from Verona to Vicenza, and catching Radetzky between two fires, and he shrank with childish fear from crossing the Adige.

But the second he flung away as a child does a plaything, and by losing three whole days lost the campaign, and even the most remote chance of winning the Italian crown. The King had all the imperfections of the Peninsular character, and unless a thing was done on the impulse of the moment, it was put off till *domani*—to-morrow—to-morrow.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WAR (*continued*).

EXACTLY as I had anticipated, I met the King coming out of Villa Franca as I entered the village, and one of his staff gave me a knowing wink as we passed, which was perfectly understood between us, and, I must say, was not over complimentary to his Majesty.

That day the unhappy monarch must have drunk a bitter cup to the very dregs; and all his subsequent misfortunes could not, in my opinion, have caused him more pain. Yet such is this poor human nature, that ere the week was out, all this mortification was forgotten, and Charles Albert was ready to engage in a new set of idle intrigues, which eventually led to his ruin.

If the King was annoyed, how furious was the Duke of Savoy, and the whole mass of the army, I may say, who saw victory and glory within their grasp, and both again elude it. I never observed so much bitter grief apparent in men's countenances,

and many a long day afterwards was the idle march on Alpo a subject of deep regret.

The troops defiled along the road for many hours togetner, and so insolent did the Austrians become, that a partially successful attempt was made to cut out the money-chest, and the principal baggage of a regiment, in the long interval which indiscreetly was allowed to exist between the two battalions escorting it. A Piedmontese colonel of lancers distinguished himself in this dilemma, as at the head of a few men he made a most gallant charge, and contrived to rescue the most valuable part of the convoy.

The pretty town of Villa Franca became the scene of much military display on this occasion, and the younger officers carried on the war of fun and frolic in the usual reckless manner. To add to the attraction, and turn half the young men's heads wild, we were favoured with the presence of some English ladies, who had ridden over from Dezenzano on horseback in most becoming Parisian dresses, and who were much disappointed that no fight was taking place.

One of the ladies was a celebrated beauty, well known as a leading belle in the so-called world of fashion; and as her tight cashmere habit took her shape, displaying the gracefulness of her waist, and the luxurious fulness of her form to perfection, and as she was in high health and spirits, her presence created a sensation in the camp, that I participated in, but cannot describe.

The Duke of Savoy, a well-known admirer of that style of Venus, seemed completely fascinated, and as long as she was to be seen, he did not leave the balcony of the hotel, before which the rendezvous for all the world was held. The lady seemed equally pleased with his Royal Highness, as he was with her, and long and gracious were the courtesies exchanged between them.

Various were the questions these strangers had to ask, and insatiable was their curiosity, till, after having looked at and spoken to every one, they announced their intention of riding towards Verona, for the purpose of seeing the Austrian troops. As one of the gentlemen made himself known to me, I took the liberty of pointing out the impropriety of this step. They might or might not be ill-treated by the camp-followers, and such prizes did not fall every day in the way of marauding Croats; but even if they escaped insult or injury, they must be sent into Verona, and most probably Radetzky would not allow them to return within our lines.

The men of the party were convinced by me, but the ladies laughed at the idea of the old Field-Marshal doing them an impoliteness; and they burned with the desire of showing their lovely *Amazones* to the Austrian Hussars; but at last they listened to reason, and instead of going to Verona, they agreed to come over to Valleggio.

By the time they arrived at that village, the guards had taken up their quarters, and no sooner

did the head of the calvacade appear in sight, than preparations were made to receive the lovely representatives of Britannia. The café was brushed up for their reception, and hot coffee and cold lemonade prepared.

I know not how it came to pass that as the ladies entered the coffee-room, the gentlemen of the party were shut out, and as the doorways were instantly blocked up by ardent gazers, who left the interior free for their superior officers, not a husband, father, or brother, could get in.

"I ask a thousand pardons—let me pass."

"Who the deuce are you that asks impossibilities?"

"I am the lady's husband."

"*Tant mieux pour vous, tant pis pour elle.*"

"Pray sir, allow me."

"What?"

"To join my daughter."

"Fathers are not wanted here."

"Will you be so kind?"

"To do what?"

"To make room, as my sister calls me."

"Now gentlemen, English have some common sense, here are two hundred young men, each of whom is struggling to get into the café, which he cannot do; and do you expect all will make way for you? Your wives, daughters, and sisters, are in safe hands; when they are tired of our society, and want yours, it is probable they will come out."

I expected that more than one duel would have been the result, as English gentlemen do not understand practical jokes; but as when the ladies did appear, they were grateful for the gallant courtesy with which they had been treated, and introduced to their relatives the principal officers, all minor annoyances were forgiven, and the Amazones laughed heartily at the manner in which they had been barricadoed and besieged.

Donna Lucia was much struck at the dashing deportment of these strangers, as she had formed a different idea of the modest and retiring grace so traditionally characteristic of the daughters of Great Britain, and asked me if all persons of rank dressed as gaily, and laughed as loud.

I endeavoured to explain that women were very different at home and on the road, on horseback or on foot, and that high spirits and fresh air often made gentle people violently lively.

Donna Lucia would not understand me, or rather she understood me too well, though she became perfectly satisfied when I told her that English ladies in their domestic circle resembled her dear self, and that modesty and timidity added an ever-verdant charm to their beauty, as they certainly did to hers.

I do not know who the brilliant Amazones were, though, for discretion sake, we will suppose they formed part of an equestrian troop which, about this period, was engaged to give representations at Turin and Milan.

One of the wise plans of Charles Albert was developed about the same time that the failure at Alpo took place. As if our line was not already over-drawn, the King determined to extend it still further on the right, and to carry it some miles north to the celebrated plateau of Rivoli.

Two reasons prompted him to this act of folly—the first, that he was desirous of associating his name with all the localities where the immortal reputation of Napoleon was won; and secondly, because thence the road from Verona to the Tyrol along the river-side was commanded.

The latter was an all-sufficient reason at any other period, but now it was literally locking the stable-door after the steed was stolen, as Radetzky was in possession of as much physical strength as he stood in need of, and though he would have been better pleased if the route had been left open, he suffered very little from its being closed.

The Duke of Genoa commanded the three columns that attacked and carried the position; and as the enemy was in inferior force, and did not offer any protracted opposition, the whole affair was over in a few hours, and the Austrians driven back on the Montebaldo, and the high grounds of the Tyrol.

I paid a visit to the celebrated spot in a few days after its capture, and had the honour of being most hospitably received by the Duke of Genoa, and of being shown over the positions by his Royal Highness, and the then Major, now General, La

Marmora, lately or at present Minister of War at Turin.

The officer who accompanied me was a relative of La Marmora's, and as he had never been under fire, and was burning to have that honour, he nearly threw away his life, and mine, in his Quixotic infatuation.

When we came to a certain point, two roads offered for our choice, one evidently leading by the high grounds to Rivoli, the other following the river-side. I selected the former as safest and best, whilst my companion protested that the lower road was preferable.

Accordingly we turned our little carriage on the route leading to the point where the bridge of boats that previously existed to Pontone, had been placed, but no sooner did we arrive there, than several of the peasantry came forward, entreating us to go no further, as the Austrians filled the cottages at the other side of the Adige, and would fire on us as we passed.

I inquired if it were only at that particular place the enemy was to be seen, but the peasantry said that the whole left bank as far as Rivoli was covered with riflemen, and that we had a gauntlet to run, of not one but ten miles. Of course I prepared to retrace our steps, and take the upper road, but the pride of the Piedmontese was up, and he declared that he would not turn tail to the foe.

"Bravo, Captain!" said I, "this is true courage,

—so you, with your sword, and I, with my whip, are going to fight some hundred *Jägers*, each with musket in hand popping at us from behind safe cover. No, captain dear, have all the honour and glory to yourself, and I will take the ordinary road. Depend on it, captain dear, you and I will have need of all our pluck before the campaign is at an end, and as I am not tired of life, and have a long letter to write to-morrow, I will leave you the gig and trust to a pair of sound legs to carry me to Rivoli."

The captain could not abandon his friend, and perhaps he was convinced of his folly, so he put his helm down, and we made our way most pleasantly together.

The afternoon was lovely, and as the whole line of hills that stood between us and the Adige were covered with our videttes, who passed the word every five minutes, from one to the other, the scene was exciting and pleasing in a high degree.

At length we reached head-quarters, and we arrived just in time to partake of the well-provided dinner of the staff. I was presented to the Duke of Genoa, and to La Marmora, and being accommodated with a bed, I believe the Major's—for the Duke and two or three of the principal officers preferred sleeping under canvas in the garden—I was at home in half an hour.

At break of day I was called up to attend the Duke, as he desired to show me the manner in which the place had been carried, and the whole strength

of the immortal Rivoli. The Duke was accompanied by La Marmora, and some superior officers; and as the positions were easier inspected on foot than on horseback, we set out on a most interesting promenade.

Major La Marmora had studied in a scientific manner all the great Emperor's Italian campaigns, and, whilst showing me how the Piedmontese affair came off the other day, explained in all necessary details the combinations by which, within the space of twenty-four hours, Napoleon overthrew three armies each as numerous as his own, and made prisoners the division which had been sent to cut off his retreat in the certainty that he must be beaten.

All previous conceptions of the place, and of the great battle, now proved to be erroneous; as I found that Rivoli, though very elevated, in point of fact was in a valley, compared with the immediate neighbourhood. The plateau itself was a widely-spread circular mound that rose abruptly from the river-side, but the strength of the position did not lie there, on the contrary, that was the most exposed and naked part of the locality. The only advantage that Rivoli really possessed was the command it gave of the high road running on the opposite bank of the river from Verona to the Tyrol.

It was most important to Napoleon that an enemy should not close that road as long as he possessed Verona and was master of Lombardy and Venetia, but to Charles Albert the plateau was a dead loss,

as our line was carried far beyond all reasonable proportions, and the number of men employed there were just so many isolated.

All the high grounds were held by the Austrians; and it was evident that whenever Radetzky wished, he could pour down a mass of men on our left flank, and in front, that no force we could afford to hold there would be able to resist.

The views from the plateau were magnificent beyond description, vast mountains overhung the river and swelled up to the clouds in front, the dark mass being relieved by the white villages dotted here and there, and by the cultivated farms of the lower slopes, whilst the troops spread in picturesque groups over the near ground, gave a picture of still and animated nature of the most imposing and interesting kind.

Major La Marmora showed me all the positions from whence the enemy had been dislodged, as well as the places where he was supposed to lay in wait on the opposite side of the river; and he pointed out a battery on the hill side, which the Austrian engineers had constructed by letting men down by ropes from the mountain-top to a spot where a lodgment could be made good. Two nine-pounders were already in position, and a strong cover thrown up, behind which the men were sheltered, and from the extent of the works it was evident that at least seven or eight pieces more would be established there without delay.

The guns, the men, the ammunition, had all to be let down by ropes from the edge of the rock, but such was the determination of the Austrian chief, and the willingness to obey him, that the thing was nearly accomplished, and the two pieces mounted had already given practical evidence of their range.

He showed me the guns directly pointing on the place where we stood, and told me it was probable that the Austrians would send a shot at the uniforms.

It was Sunday morning,—the Tedeschi were probably at prayers, or the hours for business had not begun, and the expected discharge did not take place; but only imagine, dear madam, the situation of a non-combatant, who, without profit, honour, or glory, is placed under the fire of a battery, and who prefers being massacred to exhibiting anything like fear.

The Duke of Genoa, La Marmora, and the officers of the staff, stood unconcerned as if on parade, and no one moved till the latitude and longitude of the position were explained to me; and I, though very desirous of running away, was resolved not to disgrace the character of my country, and I affected a well-acted composure.

All this was an useless bravado, both on the Duke's part, and mine, but the house of Savoy is brave even to temerity, and I had not courage enough to say I was afraid.

The worst of it was that the Austrian battery could not be replied to, as no pointing at any

angle of our guns could reach the elevated platform, and we stood to be knocked over without the satisfaction of a fight. The platform at that period appeared to be constructed merely for the purpose of annoying the Piedmontese, but later in the campaign, its real object was disclosed in a manner far from satisfactory to the cause.

CHAPTER V.

THE WAR (*continued*).

About this period Austria made a diplomatic attempt to terminate her differences with Charles Albert, by the aid of our Foreign Office, and I believe Mr. Humalauer, so many years accredited in London, and so much respected by his colleagues, was entrusted with its direction.

Many intelligent persons assert that the Cabinet of Vienna was never serious in its propositions, and that it only manœuvred to gain time till Radetzky was sufficiently strong to take the offensive; but I have some reasons to believe that all its first offers were made in good faith, and that Charles Albert, after the people of Lombardy had voted for the fusion with Piedmont, might have had that fine province legally incorporated in his dominions.

The first proposition was limited to the right bank of the Mincio, both Peschiera and Mantua being reserved to Austria, as the strategic square formed by the four fortresses would on no account

be abandoned; but that offer was indignantly rejected by the King, who declared that he had taken up arms not to aid the Milan insurrection alone, but to procure the freedom of the whole kingdom of the Lombardo-Veneto.

It was represented that the city of Venice refused to join him, and that Manin and the influential party in it, had decided on restoring an independent republic, and therefore that he was rejecting a substance for a shadow; but the King had made up his mind to wear not only the iron crown, but to espouse the Adriatic, and he rested on his royal and matrimonial pretensions.

Austria then offered to renew the limits prescribed by the treaty of Campo Formio, and to yield the left bank, and as much of the city of Verona as stood on it, of the Adige; Peschiera, Legnago, and Mantua still being held by her: but that too was refused, and Charles Albert declared that his destiny must be fulfilled.

The negotiations broke off there, though I am positively assured that Austria subsequently offered to Piedmont the whole territory up to the river Piave, in which Venice was included; but that the then minister of foreign affairs, put the despatch very coolly in his pocket, and neither communicated it, or its substance, to the King, or to his colleagues.

On this subject great doubt exists, and though when I was at Turin I took much pains to investigate the fact, I never could obtain a satisfactory

explanation. All I can positively assert is, that the honourable and sincere patriot, Count Balbo, knew nothing of it, and that if a trick had been played by one of his colleagues, he was most unworthily deceived.

At that period there existed a strong republican party at Turin, which considered that all chance of success would be destroyed by an amicable settlement, and that not only Austrian ascendancy, but Charles Albert's supremacy must be got rid of; and it is asserted that the minister whose reputation was then compromised, though not actually on terms with that body, was well disposed towards it.

Whether the Piave was offered or not, we cannot doubt that the Mincio, and one bank of the Adige were, though, as I have said before, well-informed persons asserted that Austria never was serious in her propositions, and that her only object was to gain time for Radetzky.

This statement might be no doubt well supported by an appeal to the actual position of the Commander-in-chief, who had now in hand from 100,000 to 120,000 men, and had on so many occasions measured the military incapacity of his enemy. It is quite possible that the wily diplomacy of Vienna was trifling with Lord Palmerston and Charles Albert, but over-finessing was not the Austrian game at the moment, and the inevitable re-conquest of Lombardy was apparent.

Radetzky in the month of May possessed in the

Lombardo-Veneto only the four fortresses of the Mincio, and the Adige, with no other entrance or exit than by the Tyrol. The whole of Lombardy from the Tessin to Villa Franca, and I might say to the right bank of the Adige, was in the occupation of Charles Albert, whilst Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, and the strong positions of the Friuli, not to mention Venice herself, were all liberated from Austria, though they had not cordially joined the King.

We could understand at that period how willingly Austria might have accepted a *transaction* and obtained secure possession of even one half of her lost Italian kingdom; but after the affair of Alpo, Vicenza, Padua, Treviso, and all the Friuli were regained, and an almost magical change in Radetzky's position had taken place. I do not think that the contrast presented by the relative situation of the Austrian Commander-in-chief, before and after our stupid promenade of the 13th of June, has sufficiently been considered, and I take leave thus to call a marked attention to it.

The road from Vienna to Verona was now open, Venice was isolated and could not impede his operations. Durando, Pepe, and the minor chiefs, had retired to Venice, or re-crossed the Po, and there was not a single town, with the exception of the City of the Lagunes, that did not owe him now obedience.

In many places no doubt the inhabitants were indisposed, but they were powerless; as at Vicenza

and Padua; whilst the people of the Friuli were Austrians at heart, and the garrison of the strong place of Palma Nuova had to open its gates to General Welden, at the desire of the inhabitants.

The only enemy which Radetzky saw in the field was now in front, and he set about concerting measures to reduce him to his true value. Fortunately for the gallant veteran he was not tormented, as the Austrian officers used to be in the campaign against Napoleon, by orders and advice from Vienna, which contracted their movements, and ensured defeat, and he was left free to act according to the necessities of each case.

The Government saw that Radetzky had saved them from ruin, by restoring the *morale* of the army, and causing it to be respected, and it answered with unusual readiness to all his demands for money and reinforcements so far as it had the power to comply.

Radetzky was likewise aware that the Pope had declined giving any additional sanction to the war, and that the King of Naples, convinced that he had been betrayed by a republican cabinet, had ordered his army and fleet to return, and that in fact Durando with his Romans were acting without authority from Pio Nono, and that Pepe's contingent committed an act of rebellion to its proper sovereign, though it supposed itself justified in doing so for the more solemn obligation of defending the Italian cause.

No doubt he took efficient measures to place Durando at the side of the Po by the capitulation of Vicenza, and to send Pepe to Venice, by the occupation of Padua, but still it was more satisfactory to know that the two greatest Italian sovereigns had withdrawn from the Carlo Alberto alliance, and that he had to fight even-handed with the Sardinian monarch.

For this result the republican party, the bane of Italy, was alone responsible: it was by its caprice that the united action of Milan and Venice was prevented, that the Pope was menaced in his capital, and the King of the Two Sicilies at Naples and Palermo; that even the sovereigns of the smaller states, saw that in contributing to the war they were performing suicidal acts; and it was by its diabolical manœuvres at Turin and Milan, that Charles Albert remained so long in Lombardy, and hesitated till too late to cross the Adige.

I remember very well the effect which the papal envoy's, Monsignor Corboli Bussi, presence had at Somma Campagna, when he came to announce the determination of the sacred Pontiff to the King, previous to his visit to the Emperor in the capital of the Tyrol, and the enthusiasm with which he was followed, as we at first supposed that his mission was exactly of an opposite nature.

The Monsignor was blessed with the most angelic countenance ever given to man, resembling the ideal conception of the young Jesuit Gabriel in the *Juif*

Errant of Eugène Sue; and as his daily conduct responded to that purity of expression, he was the personification of a living saint.

The mission was most disagreeable, but he went through it with great tact, and Charles Albert, whose religious zeal knew no bounds, so far as outward observances at least went, affected to receive the communication as the will of Heaven.

The King had, however, a compensation in the minister of a southern court, who stood resolutely by him—not the King his master—but the self-styled King of Italy. This gentleman remained at head-quarters, representing, as he said, the nation, and not its political chief, and sent orders to certain his fellow subjects not to obey the royal command, but to hold good their respective stations; and he acted in all things where the duties of his diplomatic character were concerned, as if he were a free agent.

I regret to find that the diplomatist has suffered severely for this irregular conduct, though I never could understand why, after having proclaimed on the Mincio, rebellion to the sovereign, he could have trusted his person within the reach of the police at home. I was astonished at that period that the patriotic minister did not invent a new diplomatic costume, as well as a new standard of official responsibility, and I must own I was astounded to see him going to dinner at the palace, in the King's livery, whilst he repudiated his authority.

But Italian liberals have betrayed so many inconsistencies, that we must not be surprised at this, and the attraction of a laced coat, I admit, is irresistible.

The diplomatic agent at head-quarters, who, as it seemed to me, combined the greatest tact, with a perfect understanding of the position, was Count ——, of Florence, who, accredited to Turin, had accompanied the King.

This gentleman had very clear views on the subject of the Italian question in general, and the immediate interests of the Grand Duke his master, but he showed great reserve on every occasion when they were discussed, and I soon found out that he was "too cunning of fence" for me.

In fact I was not over well received by the diplomatic corps at Valleggio, as every one trembled lest what he said should appear next week in the columns of the "Times." Poor timid doves, how I laughed at their apprehension! I knew more in an hour of what was going on, than they could learn in a week, as they only spoke to one another, or received the news which the King chose to tell them, whilst I rode through the lines every day, and a battalion could not change its ground, without the fact being communicated to me.

In official news the diplomacy had the advantage; but what official news was there worth having? The issue hung on the relative strength of two armed forces, and he who knew on which side

the superiority lay, was in reality the best informed.

Mr. ——— was, I believe, a true patriot, at least he was the only one I ever knew in Italy, who risked fifty napoleons to elevate the national cause, when appearances were somewhat against it, and I often regretted since, that I was so simple as not to profit by his good-nature.

On the day the King returned from Alpo to Villa Franca, the Count, seeing the universal depression of spirits which prevailed, said, by way of restoring confidence to a group of young officers, "that in a few days all would come round again, and in a fortnight we should have possession of Verona."

"How can you say so, Count?" interposed a person who did not understand the motives of the speaker.

"Not only do I say so," continued the diplomatist, "but I am ready to bet fifty-six gold napoleons."

As I, ere this, had backed a winner for the Derby, and had, at that moment a little nest-egg at Valleggio, I was sorely tempted to take the bet: but I was prevented doing so by two reasons—the one, that I was unwilling to have it said I had given an opinion unfavourable to the cause; and the other, I presumed that Mr. ——— had some exclusive diplomatic information.

No one took up the gauntlet, and the gold napoleons remained with the lawful owner, as so

did Verona; and neither in that fortnight nor any day since, was there a chance of its being garrisoned by Charles Albert.

As I have since frequently met Count ——— at Turin, I have more than once asked him if he were really serious on that occasion, and his reply invariably has been—

"*Mon cher*, I knew the money was lost, and that the King had not the most remote chance of entering; but I would have given double the sum to restore the *morale* of our friends that day, and you see that I succeeded. I was sadly afraid," he added, "that you would have taken up the bet, as I know how fond you English are of that style of recreation, and when you drew out your tablet, to book it, I considered the sum as lost; but I repeated, as you observed I did, the offer with greater emphasis, and a louder voice, and I saw the tablet close, and that I had frightened you by so much self-confidence."

This lesson has not been lost on me since, and I am now disposed, possibly errroneously, more to underrate than to overrate diplomatic enlightenment on passing events.

A minister, of course, is perfectly well acquainted with the nature and details of any negotiation with which he may be entrusted, and has a competent knowledge of the papers he receives, and the papers to which he puts his signature; but I rarely knew one who had more than a smattering

of useful information, or who was cognisant with details.

How is, in fact, a British ambassador, or minister, to know anything of what is passing around him, beyond his own diplomatic circle. He is too proud to seek information where others find it—too vain-glorious to speak confidentially in his own chancery, and it usually occurs, that what has been known for ten days to all the rest of the world, only finds its way to him at the end of the fortnight.

Lord Palmerston, one of the best men of business Downing-street ever saw, asked, when the French Government solicited him to sanction its arresting the newspaper couriers bringing by express the Indian Mail from Marseilles,—

"Where am I to get my information if I stop the newspapers?"

And he was right, for then, before telegraph wires, or railways were in action, we generally beat the French Cabinet by twenty-four hours out of seventy into Paris.

We attach great importance to blue books, and the documents they contain; but take every day in the year, the contemporaneous accounts given by the resident minister, and the newspaper correspondent, though the latter has arrived but a few hours before in a strange locality, and tell me whether the Government or the journal had the better intelligence, and more accurate recital of facts.

It was once said to a certain minister,—"I hope

Mr. *A.*," a minister in a foreign city, "will be kind to Mr. *B.*," (meaning me). "I hope," was the reply, "Mr. *B.* will be kind to Mr. *A.*, for not a line worth reading do we get from him."

If the resident diplomatist knows little, the secretary of legation and the *attachés* know nothing at all. They must be very discreet, and as they cannot disclose the nature of the documents they copied that day, they cannot inquire what has been done in other chanceries.

Perhaps it is quite right that the public service should be so conducted, as when the home government chooses to act, its intentions are clearly expressed, and implicitly followed out; but I will take the liberty to say, that in more than one instance, nay in many, the first information was brought to Downing-street in the morning paper, and on that information Lord Palmerston often made up his mind to the course of action necessary in the case.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WAR (*continued*).

AFTER the affairs of Alpo and of Rivoli, we remained for nearly a fortnight in complete inactivity; and were it not that we had a merry, free-hearted set of young Piedmontese officers, we should have been devoured by *ennui* at Valleggio.

Our delightful *al fresco soirées* continued, however, and there the last news from Turin and Milan was discussed, as well as the gossip of the camp; but the female members of the association were few in number, and it was only when some of the leaders of fashion from the capital appeared that Donna Lucia had a rival near the throne.

Her confidence in Charles Albert and the success of the national cause continued unabated; but she frequently asked me to explain the reasons why nothing more important was going on, and in what manner the King proposed to annihilate Radetzky.

I think, if our fair hostess had been left to the

guidance of the old Priest Don Antonio, of "our own Correspondent," and of the Piedmontese officers who formed part of our evening society, she would have seen the prudence of detaching Don Pietro gradually from the political network in which he got foolishly entangled; but the old diplomatist, to whom I have more than once referred, spoke so fluently and so eloquently in the name of liberty, that she abandoned reason and reflection, and trusted only to what he said.

She called Don Antonio, in round terms, an Austrian, which, perhaps, he was at heart, and I found I gradually was declining in favour, because I did not hesitate to expose to her all the errors of the King's proceedings.

The children grew in beauty and in grace; the haughty Maria, proud of her opening loveliness, and the tender Julia, clinging to her mother's arms, as do the tendrils of the vine to the young poplar, or like a rosebud joined to the more developed yet still delicate flower.

The women of Lombardy are said, by painters, to have a Madonna cast of countenance. How often did I admit the truth of this remark, on seeing Donna Lucia and her beautiful child, like the Virgin of Murillo, as Byron says of Ginevra, "Above all pain, yet pitying all distress," so innocent, so tender, so pensive, and so fascinating.

Were I not an ugly fat old man, people would think that I was in love with Donna Lucia; but

never were they more mistaken in their lives; I might as well fall in love with a canvas of Correggio's, though, as to worshiping it and her, I plead guilty; for the young wife and twice mama's whole heart was engaged in the well-being of her husband and children, and not even the gayest of the staff could venture on a complimentary word beyond a common-place.

Among the *aides-de-camp* of the general officers stationed almost permanently at this village, there was one of the finest-hearted, best-tempered, dare-devils I ever met with, an English officer of the Piedmontese Lancers, who was the life and soul of the company.

Poor fellow, he is not alive to read these lines, and to receive the full tribute of my affection as well as that of all who were associated with him at the camp. He escaped the dangers of the war, but fell a victim shortly after its termination to one of those ordinary attacks, which are fatal in their result, though not regarded as dangerous by the young and vigorous.

It is impossible to recall all the absurd pranks he played, in the round of fun and levity in which he kept us all engaged, but whenever a mad freak that no one else would imagine, was played off, he and his servant, whom he called Radetzky, were at the head and the tail. No gravity could withstand the approaches of his mirth, no coldness induce him to desist; the sport commenced must be played

out, and no matter what occurred, neither man, maid, nor woman, had the heart to complain.

The quarters where he lodged was a kind of bear-garden; but though he tossed everything in the house topsy-turvy, as they say, and the house itself ten times a-day out of the window, neither landlord nor landlady could be offended.

He spoke German, French, and Italian, as well as English; sung, with an excellent voice, scraps of songs in every language, walked, rode, danced, and ran more and better than any one else, and, as to the quantity of cigars he smoked, they should be counted by hundreds, and not by dozens.

The maddest Irishman I ever met with was not so jolly as this Englishman; and Londoner he was, though glad I should have been to claim him as a countryman. He had served the Austrians—made love—made debts—fought duels—till Gallicia, Croatia, and Hungary were too hot to hold him. Then he came to Italy in the commencement of the war in pursuit of a pair of blue eyes, and, merely to fill up a vacant hour, took service with Charles Albert.

He was not overburdened with cash, but what he had he spent nobly and generously, and his purse was ever open to the poor. The balance of his treasury was kept in an old stocking, and well for him on one occasion that such was his fancy, as his portmanteau fell into bad hands, his linen and fine clothes were all abstracted—everything in short but

the old stocking, where thirty gold napoleons were deposited.

His loss on the whole was considerable for a young campaigner, but the pain it caused him was nothing in comparison to the delight he felt on finding that the purse was safe.

"Such," he exclaimed, "is the great mystery of the house of Rothschild—silver and copper money only are kept in the iron safe, the gold is ranged in old stockings in the housekeeper's rooms; and whenever Baron James, or Baron Samuel, wants ten thousand pounds, he calls for a pair of Shetland hose or of Nottingham yarn."

Our merry friend was confined for some days to bed by a bruised arm, or some other trifling injury, and the weather being very oppressive, he caused his mattrass to be carried to the grass plot every afternoon, and there of course he was surrounded by a crowd of friends.

As the house where he was so hospitably treated was not far from the high road, almost every person passing came in to pay their compliments to the wounded hero. Many of the village belles, and the young women engaged in winding silk, were amongst the number, and one of his high romps used to be, when his fair audience was *au grand complet*, suddenly to throw off the covering of the bed, jump up in his drawers and a long night dress, and with the risk of being again laid up, caper and dance like a madman about the garden.

Only imagine the terror of the assembled fair, on seeing the bold dragoon without his uniform, spring from the mattrass, and exhibit the activity of his limbs in the most grotesque attitudes.

Of course there was an universal scream, and a general run at the garden gate to get out of his way, but he was foremost in the race; and if any unfortunate rustic was riding past from market, he used to dash on behind to the astonishment of the poor man, and then jumping down again, affect to pursue the village maids.

And still all this folly was tempered with such a dash of common sense, that I never knew any real cause of offence being given by him; and all the world excused his pranks, because his heart was so good, and his ordinary deportment that of a perfect gentleman.

It often happened at the camp that each aide-de-camp could not get a separate bed-room, and the three young fellows who were thus associated, had to share one chamber, each laying his mattrass in a corner; but it was in vain to think of sleep where our friend was, and either by telling funny stories, flinging pillows at the other's heads, or tossing off the bed-clothes, he kept them in perpetual motion. He had a constitution of iron, and no fatigue or want of rest discomposed him, and he could not understand what men of his age meant when they complained.

As to me I had to run a perpetual gauntlet when

he and his pupils were present, my only resource being to lock and bar my door; though if the first floor windows were open the door was no defence, as he and they found means to clamber to them. With all this *insouciance* and levity, he was submissive to orders, and never failed in any point of duty; he was a perfect horseman, an accomplished swordsman, and as brave as a lion in the field; and if his General wanted any thing to be done, which required minute attention, great promptitude, and thorough intelligence, he was sure to be selected.

He had one fault, and that was an over tenderness to the fair sex; and I have no doubt if his true story was known, all his misfortunes could be attributed to that cause. Some one was always expected by him from Turin, Milan, or Brescia at Dezenzano; and many was the night when he thought he was safe in breaking bounds for a few hours, that he started for Dezenzano to receive or drop a letter at a given address, and return in time for morning orders.

He was one of our jolly party to Dezenzano, when the "ox-eyed Juno" and the Venetian Countess honoured us with a visit; and the only part of that story I have kept back, is the confusion that prevailed in the hotel in the middle of the night, which he confessed to me he was the cause of, though when his room was examined, he was found apparently asleep in bed, and acted a well-imagined rage at being disturbed.

Generally speaking, the Italians do not like that military or diplomatic appointments should be given to strangers, as the youth of noble family will not engage in any other profession; but I never heard a complaint made of his being employed, and the whole camp would have been delighted if a proper occasion had occurred when he could be promoted or decorated.

Donna Lucia found, as I often did myself, that the young lancer was *too fast* for her, and she did not encourage his visits to her *réunions*. She was of a still and quiet nature, more anxious to hear the instructive conversation of the old diplomatist than the wild sallies of the merry madcap; but he had his consolation elsewhere, at least so the rumour went, and so I had reason to believe.

During this fortnight of repose I took many a long walk with Don Antonio, and some of the reverend Padres of his acquaintance, and received from them a vast body of useful information on the state of the country now, and the condition of the Lombardo-Veneto under the French and Austrian rule.

Their favourite topic however was the baronial grandeur of Valleggio and its vicinity in the old times, when the Visconti, Scaligeri, and Gonzagas fought for the possession of it, of Verona, and of Mantua. Under their direction I traced one of the great projects entertained, and partly executed by the Visconti, to enable them to attempt an

escalade of the city of Mantua, which the lake created by the waters of the Mincio rendered impossible.

"If," said the engineers of the powerful baron, "we can change the current of the Mincio, and cause it to discharge itself into the Po, or the Adige east of Mantua, we shall drain the lake of its usual supply, and the waters round the fortress will pour off by their present exit;" and acting on that idea, they realised it so far as to manifest its practicability, till the Gonzagas finding their position not so secure as they expected, came to terms, and agreed to divide the land lying between Verona and Mantua, from the Mincio to the Adige.

The boundary line exists at the present hour, but the great chasm by which the flood of the river was to be carried away has been filled up by the accumulation of earth, or the falling in of matter from the mountain side; and its tracing alone can be well distinguished. You will find it on the left bank half way between Peschiera and Valleggio, where a deep valley runs between two hills; and even now it is not difficult there to change the direction of the stream.

Don Antonio contended that Charles Albert might adopt the same expedient in lieu of investing Mantua, as he proposed to do; but as the canal could not be cut to the Adige or the Po, what was to become of the fertile plains of Villa Franca?—and must not of necessity the whole valley be flooded and ruined!

The priests contended that Radetzky would do as

the Gonzagas did,—come to terms, if the practicability of the thing was made evident; but I maintained that the sly veteran was not so easily humbugged into submission, and that he had now so often proved the fickleness of Charles Albert's nature, that he considered all the advantages of the game were on his side.

There are at Villa Franca the well-preserved remains of one of the chateaux of the Visconti, which is well worth a visit; but the most picturesque object in the country, is the castle of the Scaligeri, built on the rocks overlooking the Mincio, Valleggio, and the valley of the river towards Goito, romantic from its site, but still more so from the varied forms into which, during centuries, the mass of ruins has been thrown.

The castle itself is of tremendous height, and all other objects are disregarded when that is seen from a certain distance; but as you climb, the whole extent of the fortress is traced, and you are struck with the immensity of the space occupied by it.

I know no castle on the banks of the Rhine which presents a bolder and more imposing front, or any situation where an immense structure like it, can be more picturesquely displayed, particularly when seen from the river-side, as there a chain of fortifications, consisting of bastions and a continuous wall, runs from the castle to the Mincio, which cannot be discovered at any other point of view.

The Piedmontese established for a short period a

battery at this castle; but the building is devoted in ordinary times to the ignoble purposes of a great cow house, where many hundreds of these useful animals are enclosed at night.

When the moon was up and her pure rays played on the surface of the calm stream, or were broken into jets of silver light where the current is fretted by the rocks of the Borghetto, it was one of our most attractive promenades to climb the castle sides, and, reposing on a rock, dream of baronial rights, and the glories of the olden days.

Then were the glowing words of the Italian diplomatist heard with most attention; then were true aspirations for national independence uttered in low, yet ardent tones; then did the soft sigh and gentle voice of Donna Lucia touch the romantic chords of every heart, and then did the writer of these lines grieve that the days of his youth were past, and that the language of romance or affection did not suit his years.

"Is this not lovely, Donna Lucia? is not Italy a country worth fighting for? should the coarse-minded Tedeschi own these poetic plains? and may I when restored to my own home, think over the loveliness of this scene and the presence of those who give it its greatest charm?"

"Yes, caro signore. Would that O'Connell were alive to see it with us; his cousin is associated with everything connected with this period. Is it not so, Don Pietro?"

I wished Don Pietro at that moment at the bottom of the Mincio: but are we not all husbands, and fathers; and what better can a young matron do, than appeal on every occasion for sympathy to her lord and master?

Donna Lucia knew little of the Scaligeri, or the Gonzagas, or of the civil feuds which caused the building of the castle in whose ruins we were; but she had a feeling for the charm of nature—the poetic heart of a young Italian—a devotion to her country that knew no bounds, and that kind of regard for "our own correspondent" that you, dear madam, have for an old friend of the family, a gentleman who wears a wig, or whose head is bald.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WAR *(continued)*.

CHARLES ALBERT planned and executed immediately after the period I now speak of, that unaccountable act of folly which led to the defeats of Custoza and Somma Campagna, and caused the retreat on Milan, as well as the loss of the whole campaign.

It is with great regret that each time I mention that monarch's name, I have to use the privilege which writers assume of giving a decided opinion on matters of common notoriety; but as every one who has published on this campaign, and every one who now speaks of it, uses the same language, I trust I may be excused for giving a frank and impartial opinion on matters that fell under my immediate observation, and with the details of which I made myself perfectly well acquainted.

It is not for the vain triumph of saying that I predicted the inevitable fatal consequences of the King's military projects, and made the truth

known in quarters of the highest importance, that I thus dwell on the subject, but with the hope of pointing out to the Lombards and Venetians the errors of the campaign, and of showing the manner in which not only defeat could have been avoided, but a certain victory secured.

Charles Albert, who believed himself to be a first-rate captain, wished to imitate in everything the plan pursued by the great Napoleon, and as the capture of Mantua was a *sine quâ non* with the Emperor, so he resolved that it was equally so for him. He therefore determined regularly to invest the place, and force the general in command to a surrender.

To execute this project the more effectually, he withdrew several regiments from Rivoli, thinned the lines of Somma Campagna and Valleggio, and left all the important points of his positions with not one half the force needed for their protection. He likewise removed his own head quarters to Marmirolo, within three miles of Mantua, and proceeded with the greatest composure to invest the place.

In order to induce the weak monarch to execute this insane act on the most enlarged scale, the Austrians played off a hoax which is generally deemed to be apocryphal, but which I know to be undoubtedly true, as the best friend I ever had at the camp, who had daily access to the royal presence, gave me all the details within a few hours after they had occurred.

One of the besiegers' advanced patrols took prisoner a general officer who, bound for Verona, had missed his way, and thus fell into the enemy's hands. This gentleman demanded instantly to be brought before the King, and his Majesty on hearing his real, or assumed name, consented to receive him, and even went so far as to grant an interview at which no third person was present.

What was Charles Albert's astonishment on hearing that the important personage was the bearer of an offer for the surrender of the fortress, on the consideration of the sum of two millions of francs, to be paid on obtaining possession of the gates, the only other condition required being, that the King should bring at least sixty thousand men round the place, in order that the traitors might say they had capitulated before such an immense force so far outnumbering the garrison.

The officer explained that he had thrown himself in the way of the flying party by which he had been captured, as the most certain mode of getting to the King's presence without exciting suspicion, and he required that he should be set at liberty as soon as possible for the purpose of informing the other conspirators of the result of the negociation.

Charles Albert was delighted with this occurrence, as he preferred intrigue to everything direct and straightforward—and calculating that the siege, even if successful, would cost five millions of francs, agreed at once to the terms demanded, and after a

few hours' delay, during which all particulars were arranged, he ordered the officer to be set at liberty.

The King, I was assured, could not contain the exuberance of his joy that day, and he silenced with his most imperious tone those in his confidence who ventured to make any remonstrance. The whole affair was to him as plain as noon-day light. Mantua would be in his hands next week, and a saving of three millions made.

Orders were sent off the same night to all disposable troops to join the camp, and ere many days were over, we had nominally, 65,000 near the marshes in the middle of July, and of course not less than 15,000 men in hospital.

This was exactly what Radetzky desired, and the moment he found that Charles Albert had swallowed the bait, he set about making those preparations at Verona, by which the final blow was shortly after struck. Instead of increasing the garrison of Mantua, he gradually diminished it, drawing off silently, and at night, by the circuitous road of Legnago, every man that he thought could be spared.

The gentleman who gave me this information, was equally persuaded with the King, that a traitorous party did exist in the fortress willing to sell the place for so large a bribe, and he rejoiced in his heart that at last a great act was about to be accomplished; but he looked at me with suprise when I asked him

to walk across the fields where we could not be disturbed or overheard, as I had something still more important to say.

We accordingly turned off the road into a suitable place, and there I entreated him to exercise all his common sense and intelligence, and if Charles Albert would listen to him, to save the monarch from certain ruin. I showed him that Radetzky was now superior in physical and moral force to the King, that his army was better appointed, and that the moment was arrived when a decisive blow must be risked.

I proved that the object of the veteran was to induce, by one means or another, the King to weaken his left flank and centre, and draw down the bulk of his force to the pestilent marshes of Mantua, and I contended that the offer made, by the pretended general officer of the surrender of the fortress, was a sham, the real object of the hoax being betrayed by the condition attached to it, namely, that the great mass of the Piedmontese force should be grouped round the lake. Already ten thousand were in the hospital with ague and fever, and if the same position were held another fortnight, the muster-roll would not produce one-half its men.

My noble and accomplished friend was much struck with the logical clearness of my reasoning, but though he promised to speak to the King, I saw he was not convinced, and I left him, persuaded that the campaign was at an end, and that before

three weeks elapsed, Charles Albert would be flying before Radetzky.

As I made it a rule not to sleep in the vicinity of the fens, I returned to Valleggio—and sending for a gentleman who had a particular importance attached to his name, prevailed on him to write a letter to a personage who had all-powerful influence at that moment, depicting the situation of military affairs in their true light, and advising him to set his house in order.

The same courier that bore this letter carried the royal and other correspondence from the camp to Turin; and great was the rejoicing that the latter caused, as in it the approaching capitulation of Mantua was declared, and the full and immediate success of the campaign anticipated.

I had the satisfaction of learning however that my hints were not thrown away in the quarter to which they were directed, and an important movement that occurred soon after, was, I have no doubt, mainly influenced by them.

Fully impressed with the truth of my conviction, I determined to make an attempt to save the amiable and kind friends with whom I had been so long domesticated from the approaching ruin, and no sooner had I written my public letters, than I sent my compliments to my dear hostess, and requested the honour of five minutes' conversation.

Donna Lucia, who was as artless and as innocent as a child, came at once to my chamber, though she

an instant after regretted having done so, when she saw me go to the door and lock it, as I neither wished to be interrupted by her husband, brother, children or servants. To her glance of alarm I responded by a most formal bow, and going to the windows, then both open, requested her at the same time to take a seat near me at the table placed between them.

The gentle lady's confidence was at once restored, and as I had always treated her with the most profound respect, she exclaimed—

"What can we do for you, Caro O'Connell?"

"Donna Lucia," I replied, "give me your most serious attention, as the welfare of your husband and children may be determined by what I say. You will hear this evening from our diplomatic friend that the triumph of the King's cause is near at hand; but I tell you that immediate destruction awaits it. I have just come from head-quarters, where I received information the true value of which I alone, it appears, understand. For God's sake, Donna Lucia, withdraw your husband ere it be too late from that stupid Provisional Government, which is calculated to do no good to the campaign, and serves only to compromise honest and well-meaning men. I dare not speak to Don Pietro, for he looks upon me as an Austrian, and disregards all I say, and his pride will not allow him to retract, but you, his gentle partner, can pretend that he neglects his private affairs, that the

silk crop calls for more attention, that his farm should be better looked after, and affect to believe that disorder is caused by his daily visits to Villa Franca where the Junta meets. I cannot speak to others, dearest friend, as I speak to you, as they would impute to me ideas hostile to Italian independence, and Don Pietro, more than any other, would laugh at what I say. Mark me, dearest Donna Lucia (as I wrote down the day of the month on a scrap of paper which I gave her) mark me well, on this day fortnight the Austrians will be in Valleggio. Do not, I entreat you, mention to your husband this confidential conversation, but act upon it, my dear friend. I implore you for your own sake, and that of the sweet *bambine*."

I am sorry to say, however, that my kind hostess was not convinced, and I could in our evening *réunion* see that she had betrayed me not only to Don Pietro, but to the poetical diplomatist, and so marked a coldness was apparent, in the manner of all, till the hour of danger came, that I asked Padre Antonio to find me another lodging, if he could do so without wounding the self-love of my dear friends.

About ten days after this conversation, the Count ——, one of the most distinguished noblemen and profound scholars in Italy, whose family is so well known at Verona, invited our party to spend the day at his magnificent villa at Cola, near the Lake of Garda, and a most delightful morning we passed

there, inspecting the gardens and grounds as well as the treasures of Arabic manuscripts which his library boasts of.

From a particular point in the garden, a most superb view of the Upper Adige, the mountains that overhang its banks, and the long continued chasm only terminated by the plateau of Rivoli, is obtained.

As we examined the ever-varying features of the romantic scenery, suddenly a blaze of light and the report of cannon from the mountain top was seen and heard, and in an instant after came sheets of flame from the hills directly in front, with the sharp ring of musquetry in the distance. At the same moment burst forth the cannonade at this side of the Plateau, accompanied by the fire-fly light of the fusillade, which issued from every hedge.

I looked at Don Pietro, but he was *insouciant* as usual, and the Count when appealed to said it was one of those skirmishes which everyday occurred between the Austrians above Rivoli and the Piedmontese who held the plateau.

I said nothing, and I walked aside to restrain my nervous emotion, for I knew well what it meant; and that the fire from the mountain on the left bank of the Adige was that of the battery under whose guns I had been with the Duke of Genoa, and Major La Marmara, now playing on the flank of the Piedmontese; and that the cannonade and musquetry in front came from the Austrians, who

previous to Radetzky's grand plan being developed, were feeling the strength of our positions.

I was very anxious to ride forward, and gain correct intelligence, but as Donna Lucia would not allow her Pietro to move, nor the Countess permit her husband to join me, and as I was with their carriage, I was compelled to forego my wishes.

I managed, however, to extract a good deal of information in the neighbourhood, and I discovered that Austrian spies were nightly in communication with the Modenese allies quartered in the village, and that the latter had agreed to abandon the position which they held; of course for a consideration.

This fact was of great importance to my course of reasoning, as here probably was the wedge to be introduced that was to enable a larger force to act in the rear of the division now at Rivoli, or aid in turning the flank of those who held the positions from Somma Campagna to the principal points of that tongue of land, that lies between the Lake of Garda and the Upper Adige.

As I rarely mention the names of persons in these lucubrations, those generally set down being fictitious, though the individuals to whom they are given exist, I am deprived of the pleasure of eulogising by their proper titles the illustrious host and hostess of Cola.

The gentleman was one of the most accomplished cavaliers I ever saw, and the lady was a rich

specimen of an Italian *pur sang* beauty. She was splendid in face and person, like one of the divinities of Paul Veronese, and still so delicate and gentle that you were even more captivated by the fascination of her manner, than struck by the magic of her bright eye, and glowing complexion.

It is impossible to imagine a happier domestic portrait than this amiable couple's daily life exhibited; and when I considered the high position they held in the world, and contrasted it with the same rank in England, I confess that I found here everything to love as well as to admire, and should have been most sorry to have transferred my visit from this cordial home to any one castle of British pride.

I very much fear that authors who have, in speaking of Italy, depreciated the character of its female nobility, or ladies of the second class, were never in reality admitted to good society. I can only say, having a very large circle of friends, and being generally well received, that in morality and the virtues of domestic life they are inferior to none, and very superior to many I have met elsewhere.

There is, moreover, a friendly good-nature, and a tone of natural freedom about Italian ladies, that can only exist with innocence of mind. I wish the lives of many English women of fashion in the Peninsula could be placed in contrast with those of native ladies of the same rank, and I wonder to which would the palm of honour be given.

I know a little of what is going on in all the large

towns—and Heaven forgive me if I malign my fair countrywomen—but when a scandalous story is going the rounds, an English name is concerned directly or indirectly.

You will say that our women are less cunning and more incautious, so that their hearts run away with their heads; and if such be the case I only recommend them either to mend their manners or be more prudent, for many assert the shame does not consist in being naughty, but in being found out.

My host and hostess at Cola, thank God, have nothing to conceal, and from them and my friends at Valleggio, do I take my standard of Italian noble and provincial life.

The cannonade and fusillade were still going on as we left the chateau, and on that night, whilst the family was asleep, I traced the plan of action which I subsequently pursued, so as to insure that my correspondence to the "Times" should not be interrupted.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WAR (*continued*).

RADETZKY at the same time, in order to call all Charles Albert's attention to the extreme right, and render him deaf and blind to the true seat of danger, detached a force of 5000 men with a convoy of provisions for the citadel of Ferrara, which the Italians had allowed to remain in Austrian hands, though the city and its old romantic castle were under their control.

The officer in command was instructed to manœuvre, so as to make it be believed that a grand project was to be executed on the south bank of the Po, with the hope that the King would send an equal or superior force to observe him. The plan succeeded so far, but it ended badly for the Tedeschi, as the Piedmontese surprised the enemy on his return towards Mantua at Governolla, and killed or wounded five hundred, with a very small loss on their side.

This affair was much vaunted of at the time, as it was performed in first-rate style; but the true result

was unfavourable to the King, as it convinced him still more that the Austrian operations would be directed in future to the southern extremity of our lines, and he increased his force in that direction.

A general order was given that the cordon round Mantua should be advanced as closely as possible; and that the first exhibition of weakness on the part of the garrison, should be reported to head-quarters. In fact, the King was daily expecting that the promised capitulation must take place, and he took care to have the two millions of francs ready in order that no let or hindrance should occur on his side.

As I considered that nothing important would now take place at head-quarters, I remained constantly at Valleggio, watching the Villa Franca and Somma Campagna roads, and enquiring what Austrian patrols had been heard of on the previous evening. I saw that nothing was attempted as yet against either of these two points, but that constant affairs were taking place along the chain of hills that defended our position, as if the enemy was determined to ascertain what number of men we had on every principal station.

This intelligence so well agreed with my previous reasoning, that I arranged all my little affairs, and held myself ready for a start at five minutes notice.

One morning Padre Antonio ran over to our villa, quite out of breath, and panting with terror, to announce that the Austrians had forced the position of Rivoli, and compelled General Sonaz to retire

under the guns of Peschiera; Donna Lucia was present, and scolded the old priest in set terms for daring to spread such idle rumours; but when, in the course of the day, her own friends came in to confirm the intelligence, she became less confident, and inquired from me if it could possibly be true. "Wait till to-morrow, Donna Lucia," was my answer, for I presumed that Radetzky having begun in good earnest, would make himself heard in our vicinity.

General Sonaz has been blamed for abandoning his positions, and retreating on Peschiera, but the least reflection will show that he acted on sound principles. Though in the first and second day's combat at Rivoli he successfully resisted, yet it was evident that on the third day he would be attacked by greater numbers, and he ran the further risk of being altogether cut off by Radetzky's sallying in force from Verona, and occupying the high road at this side of Castel Nuovo.

Indeed when the dispositions made on that occasion by the Austrian Commander-in-chief are critically examined, it will be seen that he committed a grievous fault in not breaking our line in that direction, simultaneously with the attack on Rivoli. as Sonaz would have been caught between two fires, and must have surrendered, and then the united forces might have combined to crush the left centre of our now weakened position.

Let no one believe that Radetzky did not commit grave errors in these final operations; his faults were

as numerous as those of Charles Albert, but he had luck on his side, and above all an ample supply of rations, a want of which, in the second day's fight, lost us the campaign.

Next morning I was on foot at break of day, clambering to a kind of turret at the top of our house, from whence a widely-extended view could be obtained, and there examined with the aid of a good glass the whole of the surrounding country.

I was not long in discovering the object which I sought, and yet dreaded to find, namely, on a commanding eminence a battalion of Austrian soldiers, evidently destined to occupy our village. I examined the position well, and saw there was no immediate danger, as the men appeared to have just taken up the ground, and being unsupported, were evidently dependent on some other movement of a greater force that had not yet taken place.

I slowly descended, and waited patiently until my fair hostess appeared at breakfast; when that useful duty was performed, Don Pietro being at the camp, I asked her to do me the favour to accompany me to the turret above alluded to: she consented, and we climbed up together, and then adjusting the glass for her sight, and entreating her to be calm, I asked her what uniform was that she saw on the hill side.

One glance was sufficient—she grew as pale as a sheet—burst into a flood of tears, and exclaimed, clasping her hands, "Oh, my children—oh, my father—oh, my husband!" She then turned to me,

and with one look of gratitude repaid me for all my good wishes in her favour, and the warnings I had given, by which some of the ill consequences of the Austrian return to power might have been averted.

"Come, oh come, dearest Signore, assist me out of this horrid place; order the carriage, I will go at once with the *bambine* to my father's."

Never did I see high moral courage struggle more intensely with mental pain. She saw in a moment ruin to her husband and to her property,—but she thought only of her children, and as long as they were safe and with her, she could suffer with some degree of patience other ills.

In an instant I had the carriage ready, a mattress thrown into it, with all her plate and valuables, a sufficiency of linen, and the two richest jewels—her children, with their maid.

I undertook to remain and explain everything to Don Pietro on his return, to send him to her at once, and to continue in the house till the very last moment. I then put my kind and gentle friend into the carriage, and placing a purse with fifty gold Napoleons in her hand, begged her to use them till better times enabled her to return the gift or loan.

This last act touched Donna Lucia to the heart, as she saw that I was no hollow friend, however small the sum might be to her, and she burst again into tears, taking my hand between her two gentle palms, and giving it a pressure, the *sentiment* of which I shall carry to the grave.

"No, dear friend, I have no want of money, Don Pietro and my father are rich, and I have two thousand *lire* in this basket."

I then kissed the little hand which I retained in mine to that moment, gave one last look to the angelic countenance of my sweet friend, and, deeply affected, parted with her for ever.

I have suffered in life much mental and bodily affliction, but save in family bereavements, I never sustained a more trying moment than this parting from Donna Lucia and her *bambine*. I retired to my own room and indulged the full measure of my sorrow, and then when her excellent husband arrived, I explained to him all that had been done, entreated him to join his wife without delay, and undertook to remain and protect the house.

Don Pietro thanked me from his heart, and he too I have not seen since.

The good people of Valleggio became now sensible of the critical nature of their position, and some of the most compromised abandoned it. Their terror was augmented on finding that orders had been sent to the Piedmontese battalion, and to the regiment of raw Lombard levies that composed the garrison, to cross the Mincio, and occupy the far side of the Borghetto, so they were now without the defence of a single musket.

They began immediately to close their shops and barricade their doors, and to prepare impotent measures of resistance. Fortunately for the

inhabitants, I had more experience in the usages of war than they, so I contrived to assemble a few of the notabilities at the café, and I then explained to them the probable course of proceeding.

The Piedmontese officer before abandoning the town, had ordered barriers to be erected at the heads of streets, and one or two other equally absurd materials of defence to be prepared.

I insisted that these obstructions should at once be levelled, and I headed the party employed in removing that which lay nearest to the café on the high road, by which it was probable that the enemy would enter. I next induced the principal shopkeepers to open their doors, and prepare for a very busy trade; caused the innkeepers to collect all the provisions possible; and the municipality to prepare abundant rations for man and horse. I strongly recommended that every one should appear to be employed in his ordinary occupations; that the market-women should display their stores of crockery as usual in the streets; that the maidens should continue to unreel silk; and that no more notice should be taken of the arrival of the Austrians, than of any ordinary and expected event, or than if a Piedmontese battalion was marching through.

In short I recommended strict and absolute neutrality, and reminded my friends of the fate of Castel Nuovo; and of Radetzky's determination to burn to the ground every village that rung the tocsin, or opposed him.

Some of the magnates, improving on my hints, proposed that the corporation and principal people should go out with banners and green branches in hand, to welcome the Tedeschi,—but I scouted the base expedient as unworthy of the Italian name; and I pledged my faith, that the Commander-in-chief would be better disposed to protect the town, if an honourable neutrality were maintained, than if it crawled in the dust at his feet.

I had a long struggle with some of my obstinate hearers, but in the end I prevailed with all; and I had the satisfaction of seeing before I left the town, that my advice was followed to the letter; and of hearing subsequently that the Austrians were so struck at its calm deportment, that not the slightest excess took place; the Colonel, who occupied the room I had so long enjoyed, sending word to Don Pietro and his family that they might return, and that neither he nor his property should suffer.

Don Antonio wished to aid me in the discussion at the café, but I entreated him not to say a word, as he was suspected of being an Austrian at heart; but I begged of him to explain what I meant to the Podesta (the Mayor) and the Paroco (Parish Priest), as their influence would be most useful.

It is astonishing with what rapidity Italians change from one extreme to the other, or choose a resting-place half-way. The people of Valleggio who were in despair at mid-day, were as calm as a summer lake at four in the afternoon; and if I do not wrong

them very much, I rather think they desired the presence of the Austrians, in order that all doubts as to the future should be set at rest.

What they dreaded, and what would have taken place, if any other person but Charles Albert had commanded the Piedmontese army, was, that on hearing of the formidable attack prepared on the left wing and left centre of our lines, the whole force grouped round Mantua would be transferred the same night to Valleggio and the Mincio banks, and thus interposing a living barrier of equal weight between Radetzky and the Lombard plains, compel him once more to return to Verona.

In that case our town would have been the scene of a desolating carnage, and it is probable that not one stone would have been left on another; but the people were saved from that impending ruin, and they now in secret prayed that their safety might be at once secured by Austrian occupation.

When Charles Albert heard of Sonaz's masterly, though much criticised, retreat, he had only one course to pursue, namely, to take ground to the left and effect a junction of the whole army.

He had three bridges of communication over the Mincio between Valleggio to Peschiera; the fortress in his possession to protect his left; and he had the choice of giving battle on the high grounds at either side of the river, and compelling Radetzky to manœuvre in the valley, or of returning to his old idea of turning our right at Goito.

By these means every strong position remained in our hands, with the back country open for supplies from Brescia, Lodi, Cremona, and all the rich places of Lombardy—supplies not only of money and of rations, but of physical force; as, no doubt, at that moment if properly excited, a hundred thousand volunteers would have hurried to the camp.

Charles Albert, on the contrary, acted as if he had taken orders from Vienna, or was bent on his own ruin. He marched to Villa Franca in the rear, and on the left flank of Radetzky, and thus allowed the Austrians to place Sonaz altogether *hors-de-combat*, to occupy both banks of the Mincio, and take possession of our magazines.

At noon, on one day, the position of the Austrian army was critical in the extreme; at noon the next day, its ultimate triumph was assured.

Never since the occupation of Verona had Radetzky ventured so far from the cover of that fortress, and if the whole mass of the Piedmontese army had fallen upon him, and after the first success had moved in an oblique line towards the Adige, between Pastrengo and Verona, I really think he might have been cut off and driven towards the Tyrol.

Sonaz's division was the pivot on which this conversion might have been made, and he, whilst his extreme left was secured by the fortress of Peschiera and the Lake of Garda, could have allowed the rest of the army to operate on the centre and right of the

enemy, and close the road to Verona effectually against him.

It was evident that Radetzky dreaded a bold demonstration of this kind, by the cautious manner in which he unfolded his force, and the strong reserves he maintained, until Charles Albert's defeat was apparent; but the gallant old man felt confident in his own resources, and I think, the slowness of many of his operations arose more from the proper caution of his Austrian nature, than from any apprehension of the King's military genius.

Though I know nothing of the art of war, yet having followed many a campaign, I opine that Radetzky would have had the worst of the position, had Charles Albert manœuvred on scientific principles, and followed up the favourable chance thus offered with precision and vigour.

Had the battle been delivered in the manner I have imagined, Radetzky would have had to fight with a rapid river in his rear, a circumstance invariably avoided by every good officer; but to place him in that disadvantageous position, we should have turned his left wing, and cut off all communication with Verona.

As I saw that my sojourn at Valleggio was approaching to an end, I went down to the Borghetto, and requested the Piedmontese officer in command to give me the earliest possible notice of his intention to pull down the bridge, as it was necessary I should get my little carriage over: and he having promised

to do so, I returned to the village, and continued my useful labours in maintaining the inhabitants in their wise determination to exercise a strict neutrality.

I slept that night at Don Pietro's, and the next day having received a hint from my friend at the Borghetto, I paid a final visit to the café, received the sighs of the good Angela, the young cook at the Trattoria, and at noon quitted with deep regret the scene of so many pleasing adventures.

I was the last stranger who left the village—the diplomacy having abandoned a falling house, and the Milanese lords literally flying in dismay on the first notice of approaching danger.

CHAPTER IX.

THE RETREAT.

I FOUND the Piedmontese soldiers at the Borghetto, busily occupied in pulling down one of the arches of the bridge, the officer in command having received positive orders to do so without loss of time, and he and I concluded from that fact that Charles Albert had determined to forfeit the only chance that now remained, and instead of boldly occupying the line of the Mincio, retreat by the lower road.

We could not of course imagine that the King would have formed the absurd project he was then actually executing, of marching on Villa Franca in the rear of Radetzky, and allowing the whole Austrian army to be interposed between him and the division of General Sonaz, and I proposed going on to Volta, where no doubt tidings of the monarch's movements would be best obtained.

The gallant officer maintained his usual composed and determined manner to the men, but I soon

understood from him that our opinions were the same, and that hope was at an end.

I was surrounded by crowds of the raw Lombard levies, who, to the number of 2000, had arrived at Valleggio a few days previously, and who were evidently panic-struck at the idea that a powerful enemy was close at hand, and all crying out, as if with one voice, demanding where the Austrians were.

I pitied from my heart these poor boys who had been sent to the camp without sufficient clothing, or the common comforts given to a soldier; and I knew that the greater part had spent the first night at Valleggio, weeping and wringing their hands.

I also knew that if I made known that the Austrians were probably at this moment entering the village, the whole would have disbanded, and no road of retreat would have been left clear for me; so with well-feigned surprise I enquired what enemy they asked after, or what Austrians were they who were supposed to be so near at hand.

"Why, sir, the Austrians who were seen yesterday on the Monte Vento, and who, it is said, would pay us a visit to-day."

"Oh, now I understand; you mean the flying division that came out from Verona."

"Si, Signore."

"They have returned to Verona, and a retreat is ordered along the whole line."

"We knew it," exclaimed the *Prodi*, "the rascally Germans heard that we were here. *Viva l'Italia—Viva Carlo Alberto—Viva l'indipendenza d'Italia!* The villains, they would not let us have one shot; they do not like the Milanese steel—*Viva l'Italia!*"

The officer smiled as he understood my game, and, when I met him soon after at Brescia, he told me, that about an hour after I had left the Borghetto, the Austrian drum was heard in the village, the white uniform was seen on the hill top, and in five minutes the whole Milanese contingent had vanished.

It was like the scene of a pantomime, every man left his musket on the ground, and off they set in groups of three or four, spreading dismay through the country where they passed, as they said the Germans were in hot pursuit, after a terrific battle, in which they, the *Prodi*, had performed unheard-of acts of valour.

Fortunately they did not take the high road on which I travelled, as they now feared the Piedmontese authorities as much as the Croats, and I made my way to the hill of Volta without any difficulty.

There I understood that Charles Albert had moved forwards towards Villa Franca, instead of retreating to Goito as I had expected, and an *aide-de-camp* of General Sonaz having come up at the same time, who said that the division still maintained its ground, I resolved to go to Dezanzano,

as I thus should command the road through which all news must pass to Turin.

I should be not far distant from the main operations of Radetzky; have communication open with Peschiera by the Lake of Garda, and all the posts of the opposite shore to explore, when the Austrians retired.

Dezanzano had been from the opening of the campaign a point of some importance to me, as the mail for Turin, and Milan, and consequently for Paris and London, was despatched from it every evening; and as I had invariably refused to trust my letters to a country post, or King's couriers, and daily sent a *Pedone*, or foot-messenger, of my own with my correspondence, I had at the camp established good relations with the Post-masters, and with all the couriers, and paid a dollar to the Pedone for each journey; so that whilst the utmost irregularity prevailed with regard to every one else, not one of my letters to the "Times" failed, and its columns furnished to all Europe the only true accounts of the unhappy termination of the campaign.

A minister told me subsequently at Turin that he never knew anything of what was going on at the camp until he received the "Times," and I believe that several copies were daily sent to Paris at their special request, for distribution to the resident diplomacy.

I do not say this out of any idle boasting, for my

race is run, and the world and its vanities are fast fading before me; but I write to show persons who affect to undervalue newspaper labour, that intelligence and ingenuity must constantly be exercised; and above all, I wish to impress on my colleagues that a chance must never be given away, and that so far as central Europe is concerned, the post-office must be kept on your left hand.

It is necessary, if possible, to be present at every battle, and to see the opening and termination of every great event; but remember to get clear of a crowded road in good time, and to retreat to some quiet corner, where you can arrange your long correspondence, and despatch it to a post-office far removed from the control of the conflicting parties.

I was particularly favoured with the friendship of a gentleman in the post-office of Milan, who secured my letters on the arrival of the courier, and took care to see them despatched to Paris and London. Thus you see I arranged my little affairs so well, that when all the great men failed, I was favoured with invariable success.

I wish I had the same talent for making money as I have shown in arranging a good newspaper correspondence, and then I might have exchanged solid silver for empty praise: but the life of a journalist has its fascinations, and it is not surprising that a man who takes in charge the affairs of all the world should neglect his own.

My friend at Milan was much astonished when

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the Provisional Government appointed him to the place of Director-General in the department of letters, as he had never given that branch of civil science any attention, and he had spent his youth in flying from city to city, and visiting foreign lands.

"It is for that very reason," said I, "you have received the place. Who is so fit to sit in the *fauteuil* of the post-office, as a man who has passed the greater part of his time in a *chaise de poste?*"

This *mot* won me the director's heart, and the "Times" correspondence was regularly sent forward because its agent could make a bad pun in French.

As a good horse who knows nothing of the cares that torment his master's head, thinks only of his corn and rest at the usual hour of dinner and repose, I drew up at a country inn, half way between Volta and Dezanzano, and whilst my honest steed was comfortably employed, I sat down and composed a long epistle for the leading journal, in order that I might have it ready for the night mail at the latter town.

I described all that was taking place, and bade the readers prepare for bad news, though I still had a hope that Charles Albert would change his plans, in which case the cause of Lombard independence might be yet retrieved.

At last, my pony having hinted by a loud neigh that he was ready, we got the harness on again, and proceeded leisurely to the place of my destination.

It was very fortunate that I did not remain

another hour, as in that space of time a sergeant's guard of Austrian Lancers paid a formal visit, and finding the wine good, made a long carouse.

These lancers formed part of the Tedeschi force which had pierced our centre, and crossed the river at Mozanbano, and thus effectually realised the first part of Radetzky's plan, namely, the separating the whole division of Sonaz from the main army of Charles Albert.

The manner in which my coachman contrived to evade without giving offence, the importunities of those who wanted to ride with him on the box, or mount on the luggage top, was most amusing, and from him I learnt the use that may be made in Italy of that word *caro*, which I had hitherto so much neglected.

Various stragglers, many of them deserters from the division of Sonaz, were on the road, and all preferred riding of course to walking, and seeing a horse and little carriage bearing only two, calculated there was place for two more, or even half-a-dozen.

The difficulty was to prevent one from getting up, for that one would be a passport for all others, and so the driver directed all his wit to manage one, not many.

"Stop, and let me get up."

"No *Caro*, impossible, we have come forty miles to-day, and the horse is dead beat."

"I must get up."

"No *Caro*, we are carrying despatches for

the King, who expects fifty thousand men from Brescia."

"I say I must."

"No *Caro*, this gentleman has the fever, and I recommend you to take care."

"I only want to go to Dezanzano.

"*Caro*, we are going to Peschiera.

The invention of Pepino was a match for every one; he had an answer for all, and with *Caro* at the beginning, in the middle, and at the end of every phrase, he contrived to save the horse, and not disoblige the soldiers.

Caro Mio is as commonly used in Italy as *Mon Cher* in France, and as the Italians imagine that the idiom of all tongues, so far as good manners is concerned, is always the same, they, when they learn to speak a little of our language, address an Englishman as "my dear."

"My dear," may be forgiven to a lady, as though rather free, it is taken as continental, but the men bristle up amazingly, and your awkward John Bull inquires, "what did that fellow mean?"

"My dear, how is your mother?"

"My dear, will you take a walk?"

"My dear, will you join us at the Opera to-night?"

"By the Lord Harry if that rascal *dears* me again I will knock him down—what can he possibly mean?"

Therefore, I advise all Italians, whether marquises, or waiters at *restaurants*, affecting to be dukes, as sometimes happens, or leaders of revolution who

have escaped scot-free, and brought to London a comfortable balance for their bankers, to eschew "my dear" as much as possible, or reserve it solely for the gentle sex, who are dear to us all.

Would, (as I am on the subject, I will add,) that English ladies at home or abroad, who have occasion to write to Italian gentlemen, would choose any other manner of commencing their letter than *Caro* Fortunato, *Caro* Respilioso, *Caro* Campoforte, or any other name you please, unless they like to see their notes handed about, the *Caro* only exposed at the next *café*, in case there is nothing tender in it, or the whole note read aloud if there be words to flatter the self-love of the individual thus honoured.

English gentlemen of rank or of fortune, why don't you make yourself more amiable to your wives, and not bring them abroad to get laughed at by their *Caros?* Above all, my friends, why do you marry women who can write, or when they do, permit them to learn Italian? *Caro*, indeed! *Caro Signore* is very well, *Caro Amico* tolerable; but your *Caro* with a surname following is the very deuce, and I know more than one husband who is the devoted friend of the *Caro* of his beloved.

I am far from supposing that all the English ladies who write thus, have forgotten their duties, as if they have it is indifferent to us all what they say or write: but what vexes me is, that honest and well-meaning dames thus commit themselves, and that characters are lost without sufficient cause.

How is it, my sweet Irish women, my charming, blue-eyed and fair-haired daughters of Hibernia, that you avoid the errors your sisters of Albion so often fall into?

Is it that you have more tact, or more cunning, or is it that the voice of affection is less easily aroused in your frigid natures?

No, I can say not; but there is a warmth of manner indulged in from youth, that protects your innocence in after years, and a native delicacy that repels all ideas that are not connected with duty.

I have known many Irish ladies abroad, and compared their conduct with their graver and prouder rivals of Britannia, and few indeed are there who have furnished materials for history. To which I will add one remark that may astonish you still more, which is, that though I have rarely seen an English lady married to a foreigner, who has not had occasion to repent her choice, I never knew an Irish dame under the same circumstances, who has not been perfectly happy, and secure to the last of the affection of her husband.

I do not say the same of my inconstant countrymen, many of whom seem never tired of mischief; or, to express it more clearly, as I heard one of them say last night.—

"Sir, there is only one crime in this world a man can commit—and that is to marry! unless it be to live with his wife after he has married!"

"What bad company you must have kept, Mr. Correspondent; what very irregular morals you possess; and do you think if you had spoken in this manner, that Donna Lucia would have received you as an inmate?"

"Fair madam, I have kept company with the highest, and with those of humble life, as a person roving round the world, like me, must have done; as to my morality, it was last year blessed by the Pope, which is all-sufficient for you and for me; and as to Donna Lucia, she knew not what sin was, and, as she truly loved her husband, all other men were indifferent to her."

But on this head I will tell you a story, related to me by Captain ——, of H. M. S. ——, which exactly illustrates my principles and yours.

When H. M. S. FAME sailed into the port of Monks-bay, on the west coast of Ireland, all the lovely maidens began to look out their newest dresses, made with the largest possible number of flounces, and their mamas to sort silk stockings and other *etcetéras*, in order that their daughters should appear to advantage at next Sunday's church or chapel, as all were alike bent on conquest and matrimony.

Among others the Parson's wife was distinguished by her exemplary zeal, and not only did she and her Reverend husband determine that their three fine dashing daughters should shine in the walk, or as they said "on the flags," but they

resolved on giving a ball and supper, even if it cost one half year's income.

No sooner had the good ship cast anchor, and made all tidy, than a lot of invitations were sent on board, written in the neatest of Italian hands by Miss Caroline, Miss Maria, and Miss Patty, asking the honour of each of the officers' (by name) company on Thursday evening, the 15th, with the usual *on dansera*; and the R. S. V. P. in the corners.

The ward-room was delighted, and the midshipmen ran mad, and all answered, "have the honour," &c., &c.; all but the first-lieutenant, the Honourable Mr. Montblanc, who was a bit of a wag, and delighted to have a hit at the Parson's lady; so he "regretted extremely that he could not have the honour of accepting, &c., &c., as *he made it a rule never to meet modest women.*"

In any other country in the world—in any other harbour in the United Kingdom, this reply would have been considered most impertinent, and the next lay friend of the lady's might call the lieutenant out; but the Parson, his wife, and daughters, knew human nature better, and so saying, "we cannot be offended as he calls us modest women," they manned the best eight-oared barge in the harbour, and went off as if to see the ship, but in reality to see the first-lieutenant.

"Pa, dear, if he is cross and ugly, *just* leave him alone *now*—but if he is a duck of a man, say some-

thing civil, and swear—oh, no, not swear—but protest we cannot do without him."

The Parson, the Parson's wife, and the Parson's three daughters, were shown over the ship by the Flag, whilst the First went down to his own cabin.

"The Reverend Mr. Homespun, Sir," said his black servant; "Mrs. Homespun, and the young ladies."

"I tell you what Mr. Montblanc, my wife and daughters declare that none but an original could have written such an answer to their note as you have favoured us with; I am of the same opinion—so come you must, and in order that we may be good friends before the ball, pray waive ceremony and dine with us to-morrow. My daughters are all engaged to be married (a bouncer) so you need not be afraid."

"Oh, do come," said the Parson's wife.

"*Ah!* do," said the two elder girls.

"*Ah!*—don't," said the youngest, whose hand was, by mistake, pressed by the lieutenant's; "Monday at six, Thursday at ten."

"The Reverend Mr. Homespun's boat; side-boys there! good-bye, *adieu*, *au revoir*."

"What a fine fellow," said the Reverend Mister.

"What an elegant creature," said his wife.

"What fine eyes," said Miss Caroline.

"And what a nose," said Maria.

"The deuce take his impudence," said Miss

Patty; but in her heart she thought more of him than her sisters.

Some years after Captain —— told me this story, I was walking in the *Villa* at Naples, and remarked a very dashing well-built tar, with dark eyes, a well-shaped nose, and most seducing whiskers: and hanging on his arm, a lovely young woman, with blue eyes, fair hair, and that wild and bashful look so peculiar to Irish beauties.

"Who is that?" said I, to Captain Owen, of the Sidon.

"Oh," says he, "don't you know the Honourable Jack Montblanc, of the Fame, son of Lord Shewbright? and his wife, whom you seem to admire so much, is Patty Homespun, the daughter of the Parson at Monks-bay."

In fact the hero and the heroine of the Captain's tale, and of my second-hand story, were before me; and a lucky thing it was for the Honourable Mr. Montblanc that he went for once in his life into the society of modest women.

What I mean to prove is this, that Irish ladies make such excellent wives. But here we are at Dezanzano:—"A room with a balcony over the lake, stewed eels, fried eels, boiled eels,—trout in abundance, and a Milanese cutlet; if the same Bourdeaux is still to be had—one bottle, and let me have the last news from Sonaz and Peschiera. House, I say!"

I looked up to the first floor, and whose eyes did

I see fixed on your humble servant but those of the Venetian Countess, with her husband the Count at her side. The "ox-eyed Juno" was not there, so I took off my hat to Il Signor Conte, et la Signora Contessa, and booked them for an hour's conversation next evening.

CHAPTER X.

THE RETREAT (*continued*).

I FOUND Dezanzano crowded to excess by the gentry of the neighbouring country, who had come there as a central point where the last news was to be heard, and from whence a retreat on Brescia was practicable.

All looked upon the campaign as lost, and many an outpouring of ire took place against Charles Albert and the Provisional Government of Milan. I acted the part of comforter, and showed how all the mischief was yet to be repaired; but my audience had abandoned hope, and as many were seriously compromised as members of local juntas, they saw nothing but ruin and destruction at hand.

Whilst thus engaged, a Piedmontese officer of my acquaintance passed in a little carriage. I had seen him only a week before in the best health and spirits, but he had changed to a degree that I could not suppose possible in so short a time; and when I asked him the cause, he answered, it was fatigue and starvation.

He had fought with Sonaz at Rivoli, had retreated with him, had met the Austrians under Peschiera: but as the rascally contractors had carried off all the provisions, lest they should fall into hostile hands, he and his comrades had not tasted food for forty-eight hours.

I entreated this gentleman to stay with me at the hotel, offered to get him a warm bath, a good dinner, and a comfortable bed, but his moral force had fallen with his physical strength,—he fancied that the Austrians were in close pursuit, and declared that he must get on to Brescia.

I knew my friend well, that there was not a more resolute man in the whole army, and that on many occasions in the field he had been distinguished: but here he was now, haggard and pale, reduced physically and morally to the lowest possible state, and terrified even at his own shadow.

They say your Englishman fights best on a full stomach, your Scotchman when half fed, and your Irishman when half drunk; but I dare say the bravest and boldest of them all would have fallen to the same miserable level as my friend of the camp, had they like him been altogether deprived of food for two whole days.

The officer passed on heedless of all entreaties, and crowds flocked round me to hear the last news he gave, but I was cautious in not spreading evil tidings, and I merely said he was carrying despatches to Brescia.

The Venetian beauty presented me to her husband, and many other friends, and we had a long conversation on the borders of the lake. She had ascertained who the "ox-eyed Juno" was, and was indignant that she should have been seen in such company. She made many anxious inquiries for all the members of our party, particularly for the wild lancer who caused such a dreadful tumult at the hotel on her account, on the night of our celebrated dinner; and though she had every reason to be offended, I saw in her heart she was not displeased,—as who could be with that wild but agreeable madcap?

The Count, her husband, viewed everything with most gloomy anticipations, and he saw he must be completely ruined, as he was neither Austrian nor republican, and these were the only two parties who could become dominant at Venice. He had confided till that moment in Charles Albert, and he presumed that the Venetians would have discharged the Dictator Manin, to coalesce with him; but now the last chance was compromised, and to him it was evident that the cause of Lombardo-Veneto independence was about being lost.

There were at least two hundred families in the numerous hotels that evening, and I congratulated myself on having made choice of such pleasant quarters; but I heard a rattling of wheels, and a trampling of horses during the night, and when I came down to breakfast next morning, I was alone in our *albergo;* all the rest of the world had fled to

Brescia, terrified by the reports of some stragglers from the camp, and from the fact now well ascertained, that the Austrians were on the right bank of the Mincio.

Fortunately I was not so easily alarmed, and I remained in the same quarters for three days more, as though I was not exactly on the field of battle, I had an extended view of the country where the fight must take place, and an excellent position for obtaining information.

There was to be sure the constant risk that an Austrian flying party might enter the village, and carry me to head quarters, and I knew what Radetzky's orders were too well to entertain the slightest doubt of my being passed through Verona; but in all cases chances must be calculated, and on reviewing them, I found that the balance was in my favour.

Although the road to Peschiera and to the Mincio was either in possession of the enemy, or infested by stragglers of either army, I had communication with the fortress by water, and there were several eminences in the neighbourhood of Dezenzano, from which a good view of the country beyond the river could be procured; then, the position was equally good for advance or retreat in accordance with the movements of Charles Albert, and, on the whole, I had every reason to be content.

The post-office was in my hands, and that alone was a most important consideration; and not a day

passed that I did not send off a despatch with the latest possible intelligence.

I do not affect now to say that my information was critically correct, as I could only judge by "the line of fire," and argue on what side the advantage rested, by its being advanced, held in check, or absolutely seen in retreat.

Generally speaking a clear idea can be obtained in that way, especially if the rival forces are posted on distinctly opposing lines; but here, I may say, the fire was so mixed, in consequence of Charles Albert's attack on the rear of the Austrians, Radetzky sending out fresh troops from Verona to oppose him, and Sonaz endeavouring to form a junction with the King, that it was impossible to determine which side had the advantage.

At one moment I supposed, from seeing the advancing fire waver, and then retrograde, that Radetzky was about to repeat the same manœuvre he was compelled to resort to at Sacca, and, unable to turn our left centre, was falling back on Verona; but I subsequently discovered that I was deceived by Charles Albert retiring on Villa Franca, and the Austrian slowly following his retreat.

Previously I had hailed the fierce cannonade of the Dukes of Savoy and of Genoa, at Somma Campagna, and Custoza, as certain indication of success, as in reality it was, though in a day or two I discovered that these positions had been abandoned

in consequence of the outpouring of fresh troops from Verona.

It is most extraordinary to find that in all the combats that occurred from the first attack on Rivoli, the 22nd of July, to the final battles of Somma Campagna and Custoza, on the 25th, the Piedmontese, so far as fighting was concerned, had almost in every case the advantage.

With inferior numbers they resisted the most determined attacks, and had the plans of the King been equal to the bravery of the troops, the Austrians must have been forced again to the cover of Verona. But on every important point there was an insufficiency of physical force, and the twenty-five thousand men that had been left, in defiance of common sense, near Mantua, and the division of Sonaz, who had been ordered to Volta on the opposite side of the river, would, if added to the masses under the King and General Bava, have ensured a complete victory.

Who ever heard of a beaten army making prisoners two thousand of the victors? And yet such was the case at Somma Campagna! And who could believe that an officer who had from one hundred and fifty to two hundred pieces of the best artillery in the world at his disposal, and eighty thousand first-rate troops in hand, would have risked his existence with less than half the number of each, and have altogether neglected the distribution of rations, and the supply of ammunition.

Radetzky evidently was desirous of not compromising his safety at a great distance from the fortress until he had reduced the weight of his own opponent, and one of his first orders, after the 22nd, was to recall the division that had passed to the right of the Mincio.

He knew that if the King could be forced to retreat from Villa Franca to Goito, which he eventually did, there would be no difficulty of carrying his whole army across the stream, and of occupying the high grounds near Volta, which made him complete master of the best positions.

I was not surprised therefore to hear that the first accounts from Somma Campagna and Custoza received at Modena, Florence, and even at Turin, created great delight, and that illuminations in honour of a splendid victory had taken place, as, in point of fact, the Dukes of Savoy and Genoa carried both positions, and made two thousand prisoners, and that the despatches announcing the ignoble retreat were looked upon as impostures.

Fortunately for me, and for the honour of my correspondence, I was not betrayed into so grave an error, as I depended alone on the line of fire as evidence; and if I had seen it continually retreating on Verona, in that case only I should have supposed that Radetzky had failed.

It is a trite, but nevertheless a very true saying, that straws thrown up indicate the current of the wind, and I generally find that trifles so indifferent

that other persons do not notice them, serve me as excellent guides. Though the line of fire, if the attacks are multiplied in various points, may deceive you in the commencement of a battle, yet towards the close you may judge implicity by it, and if you understand the localities and positions of both combatants, you cannot be deceived.

We had at Dezenzano on the 24th as many rumours of victories as they had during the rest of the week at Modena and Turin, but as long as I saw Radetzky's fires on the Monte Vento, and knew that the white jackets observed the Mincio, I made up my mind that Charles Albert had wholly or partially failed.

As the battles of Custoza and Somma Campagna were the great military events of the campaign, I think I am called upon to describe them more minutely than I have done other affairs, at which I did not personally assist, but I am enabled to do so from the general inspection I made of the ground from the height near Dezenzano, and from the details I received from the officers of the Piedmontese army a few days after.

The series of manœuvres on the part of the Austrian Commander-in-chief, all leading to the same object of driving Charles Albert behind the Adda, commenced on the 22nd, by the attack of General Thurn on the plateau of Rivoli.

That affair was highly honourable to General Sonaz, who had but 6000 men to oppose 12,000,

but though the latter drove back the enemy with heavy loss, he felt himself bound in prudence to retreat to Pastrengo and Buzzolengo, but, as I have explained elsewhere, he risked being cut off by the movement which he heard the veteran chief was making on the high road from Verona to Peschiera.

On the 23rd Radetzky attacked the lines of San Giustina and Somma Campagna, defended by General Broglia, and carried them after an obstinate resistance, and thus both Sonaz and his colleague Broglia, were forced to retreat. The Austrians followed up this success by occupying all the heights on the left bank of the Mincio, and, with some degree of imprudence, even those of the right.

The Piedmontese held good under the guns of Peschiera, and then took up the commanding position of Volta, with the impression that the King would defend the river from Valleggio to Monzambano, and that a strong force at Volta would give him an efficient support at a critical period.

You will see that on the day I speak of, the respective position of the two armies was completely changed, that the Austrians held all the strong posts from Valleggio to Pastrengo, which whilst in our keeping I had so often explored; and that the Piedmontese army was cut up into three widely separated divisions, the King marching on Villa Franca in the rear of the enemy with about 40,000 men; the isolated body of 30,000 left in the vicinity

of Mantua, and the division of Sonaz stationed as we have seen at Volta.

It is said that the King did not take with him to Villa Franca more than 25,000, but it is difficult to believe that he would have ventured on the attacks he subsequently made with a force so inferior to that of the enemy, and I must suppose that the numbers I have given approach nearer the truth.

Charles Albert and General Bava decided on attacking the whole line now occupied by the enemy at the three principal points so often named, all of which he had abandoned for no just cause, namely, Somma Campagna, Custoza, and Valleggio; but the attack on Valleggio did not take place, the few shots that were exchanged there not deserving even the name of a combat. The Duke of Genoa marched against Somma Campagna, and the Duke of Savoy against Custoza, and Bava himself held the reserve between the Princes and the town of Villa Franca.

On both the important places named the Austrians were in insufficient strength, as Radetzky, believing that the King would attack in front and not in rear, had detached his main body to protect the river. The charges made by the two royal dukes were irresistible, and a positive victory crowned both their efforts, and had Bava, they say, carried the reserve on Valleggio, the falling fortunes of the King would have been once more restored.

The Piedmontese slept on the field of battle on

the night of the 25th, but no rations had been provided for the morning, and to add to the difficulty of the position, Radetzky recalled all his forces from the river side, and sent out large bodies of fresh troops from Verona. The balance was again turned, the Piedmontese now fought on the defensive, and most gallantly did they brave the attacks of overpowering numbers.

The Duke of Genoa, who held the right, looking from Villa Franca, repulsed four desperate attacks, driving off the enemy at the point of the bayonet, and the gallant Duke of Savoy not only repelled his assailant, but gained ground to the left, in the direction of Valleggio.

The third day's fight, the 27th, was marked by a renewed attempt of Radetzky to overwhelm the Duke of Genoa, and by the half offensive and half defensive operations of the Duke of Savoy, as well as the demonstrations of General Bava against Valleggio; but as the Piedmontese were not reinforced, the same men fighting on the same ground for three successive days, whilst the enemy was invigorated by fresh troops and sufficient rations, Charles Albert abandoned the field of battle in despair, and ordered the retreat of the whole line on Villa Franca.

The brave troops, exhausted with fatigue, worn out with three days' incessant fighting, to which I add half starved, still preserved such admirable order in the retreat, and made so imposing an impression on the enemy, that they were allowed to

retire on Villa-Franca as if they had been marching off parade. In fact, though they abandoned the field of battle, honour and glory remained to them: their loss of 1500 in killed and wounded, was inferior to the enemy's 2000, and 1800 prisoners were the *avant-couriers* of their success.

The material loss to Charles Albert was inconsiderable in the three days' fight; but the moral mischief was incalculable. The troops lost all confidence in him or in any of the Generals, and it was evident that unless their spirits were raised by some fortuitous circumstance, they could no longer be brought before an enemy so much better kept in hand.

The position of Villa Franca was untenable, as it is an open town situate in the centre of the Valley of Verona, and accessible on every side, and a retreat to Goito, now the only practicable route, since Valleggio had been so inconsistently abandoned, but pregnant with difficulty and with danger, alone remained.

Why Radetzky did not follow up the pursuit, or bar the King's progress to Goito, is only to be understood by a policy which the conclusion of the campaign showed was predominant at Vienna. Radetzky might have destroyed the army at Villa Franca; he might have cut it off from the Tessin at Milan; but he contented himself with compelling it to move before him to Goito, and then by Cremona to Lodi and Milan, and in the capital of Lombardy

he signed the armistice under which the King regained Turin in safety.

In like manner after the disastrous affair of Nóvara in the following year, Radetzky, who might have marched on Turin, remained tranquil at this side (the Italian) of the Sepia, and there concluded the convention with the present King, which laid the foundation of, I hope, a solid peace between the courts of Turin and Vienna.

From the moderation shown on these three several occasions, it is obvious that the Imperial Government had no desire to destroy the Sardinian monarchy, but on the contrary to strengthen and support it as long as it maintained a strictly neutral position.

It is not Royalist Piedmont that Austria feared at that period, but Republican France, and gladly does Austria interpose between the latter and her Italian dominions a natural and moral bulwark—namely, the Alps, the neutrality of the kingdom of Sardinia, and the confederation of Switzerland. The Tedeschi during the whole of the retreat from Goito to Milan, gave twenty-four hours' law to the Piedmontese army, instead of following it up *ventre-à-terre*, as in a military sense they ought and were expected to have done.

No one can better speak on this subject than I can, as I never followed the retreating masses until from twenty to twenty-four hours after the rear-guard had marched off, and not until notice was given me

that Austrian videttes were at hand. I know it has been said that the Austrians were afraid to approach too near a gallant and still respectable force; but though there may be some truth in this repose after the second day's march, and when the *morale* of the army was restored by abundant rations, and a calm night's rest, in a miraculous manner, why did Radetzky allow it time to be thus refreshed, if he were truly bent on its destruction?

The elasticity of the army was gone after the failure of its superhuman exertions at Custoza, and Somma Campagna; the demoralization was increased at Goito, and by the strange blunders made by the King at Volta, and if the whole mass of the victorious enemy had fallen on it then, I cannot anticipate any but fatal consequences; yet still we see that Radetzky kept the most respectful distance, and seemed to invite the vanquished foe to withdraw.

The Greeks said you should build even a bridge of gold for a retreating enemy. I think that the Austrian cabinet was acting on the same principle, influenced no doubt by the wise motive of freeing their soil from hostile footsteps; and yet more by the still nobler policy of maintaining the Sardinian monarchy in all its necessary strength, and sparing the army as a material element of its existence.

CHAPTER XI.

THE RETREAT (*continued*).

DURING this brief sojourn at Dezenzano, I had a flagrant proof of the different manner in which Piedmontese and Austrian requisitions for wine and provisions were treated by the native authorities. Every hour stragglers from our camp, broken down with fatigue, or half-starved soldiers, were arriving, but I saw no preparations made to receive or relieve them, and the greater part passed on to Brescia in the hope of finding shelter and better treatment.

I spoke to the principal inhabitants on the subject, but no one paid attention to what I said, and a circumstance that occurred on the third day showed me very plainly, in what direction the sympathies of our patriots were bent.

On that day the municipality received a civil note from one of the Austrian generals, who had crossed the Mincio, requesting that so many thousand rations of corn, rice, meat, and wine should be sent on the

following noon to a place named, between Volta and our village, to which was added a significant post-script, intimating, that if the rations were not sent at the assigned period, he, the officer, would in person come and take them.

At break of day next morning I saw a long train of laden carriages prepared on the high road, and on inquiry, I found that they conveyed even more than the supply demanded, and that the Podesta and his colleagues, ashamed of what they were doing, had sent off the cars thus early for the purpose of concealing, as far as was possible, their conduct from general observation.

No doubt if the rations had not been furnished, the Austrian would have kept his word, and so far the municipality were acting under compulsion; but why, if flour and wine were so abundant, were not our fainting soldiers refreshed? or, is it rather not the fact, that the people preferred Tedeschi to native masters.

One of the principal innkeepers had much difficulty to arrange the sign-board of his hotel, so as to suit the frequent change of circumstances. It was known for many years as the "Imperial;" then, when Charles Albert came, it was changed to the "Royal;" next, as the Lombards were displaced, it was altered to the "National;" and when at last it was uncertain which side would ultimately prevail, the proprietor's name was substituted, and then the "Hotel Bignani" stood in letters one foot long.

The rapid advance of the Austrians, and the intelligence I had received of the King's retreat from Goito, made a change of quarters on my part necessary. As Volta, and all the country below it, was in possession of the Tedeschi, it was evident that I could not take the direct road to join Charles Albert; so, after a due study of the map, I resolved on going to Brescia, and from thence descending to Cremona, or such other place as brought me nearest to the court and camp.

Events had outrun even my calculations, and as it was more desirable than ever that true information should be sent home, I determined still more rigidly than before to keep the post-office on my left hand, and take care that our correspondence should not be intercepted.

My little pony and carriage were got rid of, and I started in the Malle Poste from Dezenzano for Brescia, in company with an old lady who was weeping and wailing the whole night; and a young Italian, who had, according to his own account, done wonders for the national cause.

The old lady was a decided bore, as she admitted that she then wept, not from any personal suffering, but for the sake of Charles Albert, and we were greatly rejoiced when she stopped at her own house in one of the villages where we changed horses; but the young man was a lively and pleasant companion, and as he read English, and was acquainted with the "Times" correspondence, by seeing it in the

columns of the "Galignani," we had the conduct of the war as a subject of discussion.

I argued directly in opposition to what I had written, to the great anger and indignation of the traveller, who, not knowing that I was the writer of the articles in question, invariably quoted the "Galignani" against me. Indeed he more than once hinted, that he thought me rather presumptuous in holding opinions contrary to so great an authority as the "Times;" and asked me, how it was possible that any private person could be as well acquainted with passing events as a contributor to that paper?

We parted at Brescia, and the young Italian highly enjoyed the joke, when I told him who I was; and I could understand the whole force of his good nature, when he paid me the doubtful compliment of being a capital Serjeant Eitherside.

We found all the villages near Brescia in a dreadful state of alarm, the arrival of the Austrians being hourly expected, and in many places, particularly in the city, an avowed determination to resist them. It was with the utmost difficulty we could get through the various obstacles that encumbered the road, or escape the over-vigilance of the patriot patrols, who were not inclined to allow even the King's courier to pass.

It was still worse when we entered the avenues of the town, as barricades were about being erected, and preparations on a large scale made for the

defence. We were surrounded by persons anxious for information, and as I had confidence in the good faith and courage of the Bresciani, I had much pleasure in relieving their immediate anxiety, by showing that Charles Albert and the Austrians were moving on the lower roads, and that the visit of the hated Tedeschi might not be expected there for several days.

I further pointed out the propriety of waiting patiently for the course of events, as it was self-evident if Charles Albert determined to evacuate Lombardy, which appeared to me most probable, it was useless for the citizens to sacrifice their lives and property in a vain resistance.

A committee of defence was sitting day and night, and the news I gave was instantly carried to it; and I have no doubt it aided very much in calming the excitement that then prevailed, and of allowing time to these honourable gentlemen to form a plan of prudent conduct.

I wish all Lombardy had been actuated by the same spirit which prevailed in this city, and in that case the cause of independence would have been well sustained, but the mountain air renders the Brescian as hardy and resolute, as the zephyrs of the valley reduce the Milanese to languor and effeminacy.

It may be true that the Sardinian monarch repressed rather than encouraged the provincial spirit, but if the people of Milan had the same hearty and sincere love of independence that

pervaded the populace which now surrounded me, they would not have allowed Charles Albert to keep them down, and this short struggle would not have had so inglorious a termination.

I remained at Brescia the greater part of one day, collecting information, and arranging my plans, and then I started for Cremona, keeping a respectful distance between me and the flank of the Austrian army, and calculating that I should alight, as I actually did, on the Piedmontese on the second or third day's retreat. I arrived with the vanguard, and was therefore fortunate to find a bed vacant at the best hotel, and I was still more lucky in meeting with my old friends of Valleggio, and the three aides-de-camp of General —— who had been my ordinary companions.

These fine young fellows had stood the perils and fatigues of the three days' flight, but they were as merry and thoughtless as ever, and the first thing we proposed was, to secure a good dinner and the best wine in the house. Later in the day the main division of the army came in, and the streets were encumbered to a degree that was most distressing.

At Cremona I met the officer, in the King's confidence, who had told me near Mantua of the imposture played on the royal credulity, and to whom I had so clearly predicted the fatal consequences of that delusion. He was delighted to see me, and paid me the most flattering compliments on the intelligence, he said, I had displayed, as well as gave

me the details of all that passed since the glorious but disastrous affairs of Custoza and Somma Campagna.

From him I understood that the retreat had been conducted with no undue precipitation, and that a gallant stand had even been made at Goito—once more at Goito—and that if Volta by some fatality had not been abandoned by General Sonaz, who too literally obeyed the order that had been given to him to join the King, one more chance had been offered of repairing our fallen fortunes.

In point of fact that statement was true, for the army which had been divided into three portions, by the separation of Sonaz, the occupation of Villa Franca, and the blockade of Mantua, was then united in one mass, and as its physical strength was still respectable, and its *morale* only partially deranged, something efficient might have been done. The brigade of Savoy was ordered to take Volta, and it did so, at the point of the bayonet, in the most gallant style, but again by some strange delusion, the hill was abandoned. The next day, however, its importance was understood, and the same brigade was once more ordered to advance.

The Savoyard has all the instinct of the French soldier, and these gallant little fellows sprung at the work as if they liked the fun, and cleared all the southern side of the hill; but the Austrians had by this time come to understand the value of the position, and so heavy a cannonade was directed

against the assailants, that no lodgment could be made on the crest. Several houses, no doubt, were got possession of, but the strength of the position remained in Tedeschi hands; and as Radetzky had ordered that it should be maintained if it cost the loss of half the army, so tremendous a resistance was made that the poor Savoyards were compelled to retire.

The suffering of the brigade in killed and wounded was awful; but none of the brave survivors complained; all they desired was, that they, properly supported, should be allowed to make another trial, and they asserted that Volta should be ours. Charles Albert, however, was persuaded that his chance of success for the campaign was gone, and, bent only on regaining Milan, or preserving the rest of the army, he sent three officers to the head-quarters of Radetzky, to ask for an armistice.

The gallant old Commander-in-Chief said he would most willingly grant it; but he exacted as conditions, that the King should withdraw the whole of his army behind the river Adda; recall the division that had gone to Venice, and surrender Peschiera to its old masters.

These conditions were most reasonable on the part of the Marshal, as he was entitled to prescribe anything he pleased; but though Charles Albert was, in continuing the retreat, about to do the very thing that was exacted, his self love, or dread of

public opinion would not allow him to accept the proposed convention in a formal manner, and he, apparently with dignity, refused it.

The army at this moment was suffering from absolute want; the rascally contractors had carried off everything, lest their property should fall into the enemy's hands, and it was with the utmost difficulty that half, or even quarter, rations could be secured.

In fact the camp was in a state of the greatest disorder; the officers preserved a tolerable degree of composure, but the men were, to a certain extent, demoralised; they had lost all confidence in their chief, and the want of sufficient food almost reduced them to despair. Still the brave Piedmontese retained their discipline in face of the enemy; but the hopes of victory were at an end, and every man now thought of his home, his children, and his farm left untilled.

The retreat was ordered on Piadena, and then on Cremona, the Austrians following at a respectful distance, it being evident, in my opinion, that the Field-Marshal was desirous of seeing the honour and solidity of the Piedmontese army preserved, and that his immediate object was secured on finding that the retreat was continued at short intervals.

Some persons asserted at the time, that an understanding had been come to between Charles Albert and Radetzky, at Volta, to this effect; and seeing the orderly style of the retreat, and the unusual

slowness of the pursuit, I was half inclined to believe so. But I received information at Turin on the subject that I cannot doubt, and I attribute the gentle pace of Radetzky to the policy indicated by the Government of Vienna, and acted upon subsequently at Milan, and in the year 1849 at Novara.

A slight affair between the advanced posts of the enemy and our rear-guard took place near Cremona, and it was glorious to see Major San Front at the head of his gallant carbineers galloping to the point of danger; but the attack was not persevered in, and I considered it to be more a policeman's warning, "walk on!" "you must move on!" than a serious demonstration.

My friend, to whom I have more than once alluded now told me, in confidence, that the King meant to make a stand behind the Adda, as there he had a broad river and a magnificent position to defend, and I have no doubt that Charles Albert was so resolved; but an adverse circumstance took place, which shall be narrated at the proper moment, and this plan of defence had to be abandoned.

The authorities of Cremona gave, in answer to the requisitions sent in by our commissariat for wine and provisions, a very insufficient supply; and great indignation was expressed by officers and men on that occasion; but it seems that the near approach of the Austrians had terrified their dastard souls; and I subsequently discovered that

at the very moment they refused to supply the worn Piedmontese with what was absolutely necessary, they were preparing a convoy of cattle, corn, and wine, to greet and propitiate the Austrians with.

I do not say that I saw with my own eyes the oxen that were sent to Radetzky, but I have not the slightest doubt on the subject, and I can affirm that as soon as the Italian troops quitted the city on their retreat to Codogna, the agents of the municipality ran in all haste to dismount the royal arms from all public buildings, and to replace them with the Austrian eagles, which had been secreted for some time in anticipation of an impending change.

One could not expect that the people of Cremona, or of any other town abandoned by Charles Albert, should have excited Austrian vengeance by an impotent defence, but they might have imitated the neutral conduct of Valleggio, and not licked the dust under their masters' feet.

CHAPTER XII.

THE RETREAT *(continued)*.

DURING the night Cremona was evacuated by Charles Albert, and when I came down at seven next morning, my three gay companions had vanished, and not the trace of a Piedmontese soldier was to be seen.

The Austrians had not yet arrived, but their videttes were in the neighbourhood, and the fire was lighted in the very hotel where I lodged, which was to grill the cutlets for the Field-Marshal's breakfast. Austrian colours were paraded in the streets—Austrian airs rehearsed by the town bands—and the Austrian eagle was soaring to each first floor, where for the last three months the cross of Savoy had been displayed.

Under these circumstances it was time to think of "Number One," so I ordered out the horse and gig, which I had retained the previous evening; but horses, like spirits, will not come for being called for, and on inquiry I found that every disposable beast and carriage had been pressed into the service the retreating army.

I offered money and a *buona-mano*, but money was not the question, but the horse, and after all my management, I saw that my hour was near at hand, and back to Verona I must go. I went to the *café* to get some refreshment, for it is bad thinking on an empty stomach, and there I met some gentlemen quietly awaiting the arrival of the Tedeschi, to whom I explained the difficulties of my case.

These persons told me that even if I had a horse, it was useless attempting the high road, as already the Austrians were in possession of it; and that the only thing I could do was to cross the Po, and, making the best of my way to Plaisance in the Duchy of Parma, rejoin the army where I could; and they moreover recommended me to be quick, as in an hour the enemy's posts would be advanced to the river side.

I had a stout pair of legs, and a broad pair of shoulders, but I had likewise a portmanteau and carpet-bag, which I did not like to relinquish, with perhaps a few pieces of gold in the vamp of an old stocking, so I sought for two porters to carry them a distance of three miles to the ferry side. Not a *fachino* was to be had for love or money; all were employed by the municipality in preparing the way for the imperial General's presence, and I was in a truly desolate position.

At last I alighted on that most commodious of all carriages, a wheel-barrow, and hired it for two dollars, with the services of a *gamin* to bring it back,

and having placed on it all my worldly goods, prepared to roll it down to the river. To save my pride I induced "boots," of the hotel, to move it beyond the gates, and it was well I did so, for on passing one of the public posts, two Austrian civil *employés* advanced, and, trying to stop me, asked me who I was?

"Civis Romanus sum," was my reply, clothed in a less classic form, and waving my hand as if it were Lord Palmerston himself, I made way, and the two clerks did not dare to arrest his lordship, or the Lord Mayor of London.

By this time it was self-evident that danger was at hand, and in order to avoid the further notice of Austrian friends, I abandoned the causeway, and dropped myself, my guide, and my barrow, into the dry bed of a rivulet which lay at some distance from the high road, and which, my little guide told me, took the same direction. I then regularly put myself in harness, and went merrily along, singing snatches of Irish songs in a low voice, or whistling as I went for want of thought.

Oh you colossal "Times," oh you wonder of the age, you miracle of invention, what would you have said if you had seen your "Own Correspondent" harnessed to a wheelbarrow, and navigating his precious load over the rocks and stones of the dry bed of a mountain torrent? And you who read the "Times," you ministers of State who tremble at its dictum, you members of Parliament who gain

immortal fame only through its columns, what would you have said on knowing that the pen whose account of the campaign gave the only information then to be depended on, was performing the duty of a dray horse?

I must say that wheeling a barrow for three miles is a very wholesome exercise, and that I never felt better, or gayer, in my life, than whilst I was so employed, and I would strongly advise Dr. Wilson or Dr. Gully at Malvern to combine it with the water-cure. I can answer for its sudorific effects, and its influence in exciting the appetites of thirst and hunger, as well as its advantages to the nervous system, when to it is united a sense of present danger, and the possibility of being arrested by vagrant Tedeschi, or being compelled to give an account of yourself and your domestic duties.

I more than once on the bank above heard guttural sounds that resembled "low Dutch"—or rather, by contrast of position, "high Dutch"—but my innocent guide said that I was wrong, and in fact we did reach the ferry-point without the slightest molestation.

I found a great crowd of people waiting for the return boats, and was informed that since break of day the current of emigration had not ceased. Men, women, and children, were flying, without any given cause, from apprehension only, though, had they remained quietly at home, Cremona was the last place where Austrian vengeance would have been exercised.

Among others we had two or three half convalescent Piedmontese soldiers, who were anxious to regain their own country, and more than one of the Milanese clerks who had played great men for one quarter as agents of the Provisional Government, and who were now returning to their former insignificance.

The greater number were the poor shopkeepers of the city, who, I presume, had figured as agents of the republic, were equally hostile to Charles Albert, and to the imperial rule, and who had no chance of finding favour in Radetzky's eyes.

I prevailed on two of these poor fellows to undertake the carrying of my luggage from the river's side to the city of Plaisance, as I learned that every disposable vehicle, even to the wheelbarrows, had been carried off; but after a mile and a half's march, the lazy rascals gave in, and declared that not for ten dollars would they work any more that day.

I was now in a sad quandary, as the town was some ten miles distant, and if I did not at once take the lead of the Austrian vanguard, it was evident that it would outstrip me on the road. Fortunately I saw a carriage at a small public-house, and finding that it was hired by only three Cremonese fugitives, I settled with the driver that in case they consented, he would have no objection to take me in the vacant place.

I accordingly entered the room where his passengers were assembled, where I found them tran-

quilly smoking their cigars after having made a succulent breakfast, but the moment they saw me, they started up in evident alarm, and inquired angrily who I was, and what I wanted.

I saw at once that, deceived by my fair complexion and foreign accent, they mistook me for a German, and consequently for a spy, of whom the country was then full, so taking out and unrolling my Foreign Office passport, having several dozen *visas* on it, with my private pass from Charles Albert, and stating that I was a Paddy Bull, I restored to them composure, and to myself the hope of getting on. I explained the arrangement I had made with the coachman, and hoped they would not refuse to ratify it, and at last succeeded in winning their consent, the diminution of one fourth of the expense being, no doubt, a consideration.

The cigars were again resumed, and I foresaw that the whole day would thus be wasted, as, the immediate sense of danger being over, the natural indolence of the Italian was resumed. This would never suit me, so clearing my throat for a speech, I said—"Gentlemen, you have been very kind to me, I am going to be still more so to you; if therefore you have, conjointly or separately, any reason to dread the Austrians, be quick in your movements, for in one half hour you will have them here. I saw their videttes as I left Cremona, and the boatmen told me they had orders to prepare for the passage of five hundred men."

I wish you had seen the effect produced by these few words; in a moment the bill was paid, and my three comrades, rushing to the door, mounted the carriage steps in all haste, and in an instant we were moving on to Plaisance. I recommended my new friends not to increase the existing alarm along the road, as matters were bad enough as they were. And I had good reason to give this advice, as everywhere we were stopped to learn the last news; the retiring groups having given the immediate approach of the Tedeschi as the motive of their rapid flight.

We found Plaisance in a state of indescribable confusion; the inns being crowded to an overflow, and the streets being so thronged with flying parties that it was almost impossible to make one's way. The owner of the carriage refused to let it go further, and I was again at a "non-plus;" but fortunately in one of the stable-yards I discovered a return carriage for Codogna, and by paying four times the ordinary amount, induced the coachman to start forthwith.

I saw that unless I got before the Austrians on the road to Milan, I must abandon all idea of seeing how the rest of the retreat of the Piedmontese army was conducted, and I was anxious to make my way to Lodi, where, behind the Adda, Charles Albert promised to make a stand. But my troubles were not yet over, and I had at Plaisance to undergo the greatest danger that had occurred to me since the opening of the campaign.

It seems that my bad manner of pronouncing Italian, added to my fair complexion, and desire to push forward, had induced several of the violent, but not fighting patriots, to believe that I was an Austrian, and of course a spy. Many a man was sacrificed for less during the latter days of the war of independence—not where the Piedmontese soldiers were found, for they were ready to protect one, but in out-of-the-way places, where native susceptibility or Italian pusillanimity had full play.

I was followed from the inn door by a crowd, till at our arrival at the bridge of boats which crosses the Po, I had to meet a mob of at least a thousand men, all vociferating "Tedescho!" and "Spia!"—followed by the consoling word "Morte!" Happily for me, I retained a moderate share of composure, so standing up in the carriage, I entreated a moment's silence, stated I was an Englishman, and asked if there was any one present who could read.

This appeal was answered by a schoolmaster, or a parish clerk, and to him I unfolded, first my British passport, and next the special privilege I had obtained from Charles Albert. This last document was a clencher, as it was written in Italian, and bore all the official seals, and, confirmed by it, the validity of the passport was admitted.

Had I not produced the Italian pass, the other paper would have been disregarded, or rather it exposed me to fresh suspicion, as no one in reality knew what it meant, and the eagle attached to the

Austrian minister's *visà*, rather produced an impression against me.

I saw at a glance, however, that a new doubt was engendered, certainly not creditable to me, and if I were first stopped as an Austrian spy, it was clear I was now sent on as one employed by Charles Albert. The mob cheered me as I drove off, though one moment before they would have spilled my blood,—but such are the risks we correspondents run, though no one thinks of giving us credit for our adventures.

The Piedmontese guard at the foot of the bridge refused to let me pass, but when the officer in command saw my papers, he ordered the road to be left open, no doubt in the full belief that I was employed in my quality of spy on a secret mission for the King. I had not the mortification of hearing any person say that such was his opinion of my occupation, and perhaps I wrong the respectable mob of Plaisance; but I am very quick in seeing what people mean, and I had then, and have still, a moral certainty, that way for me was made in the belief that I was a spy in the service of the good cause.

I crossed the river a second time for the purpose of turning the road on which it was probable the Austrian van-guard was coming, and with the hope of joining at Codogno the main body of our force.

In both these objects I succeeded, and late in the afternoon I arrived at that cheese-making town. We call, in England, a celebrated Italian cheese, Parmesan, though it does not come from the territory

of Parma, but from the rich Lombard pastures on the north of the Po, in the direction of Codogno and Lodi.

The people of these places seem born for no other purpose than to pile cheese on cheese, and wondrous were the columns of the produce of their well-worked dairies, that rose up in every house and public place around me. Codogno is still more famous than Lodi for this agricultural wealth, as the latter has also its vast stores of silk, and the attention and affection of the inhabitants are equally divided by cow-keeping and *bacchi* tending.

Both occupations are highly profitable, and the incomes arising to the lords of Milan from these two sources of agrarian wealth are enormous.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RETREAT *(continued)*.

I FOUND at Codogno the whole army assembled, and saw with pleasure that ample rations had been provided for the men; and I became convinced that after one good night's rest, and sufficient food, the moral and physical courage of our soldiers would be so far restored, as to make them more than a match for the pursuing enemy. There were others high in place who thought like me, but Charles Albert was of a different opinion, and he persevered in moving on to Lodi, and in taking up the line of the Adda.

I had no difficulty in finding enough to eat and a glass of wine, but where was a bed to be had? as the Quartermaster-general had secured every lodging at the hotels and private houses, and I met only refusal wherever I applied.

Resolved however to sleep under a good roof, and have a place where I could in quiet prepare my correspondence, I formed a little plan, and calling

the coachman to my aid, gave him orders to walk his horse slowly on the right-hand of the High Street, and, wherever I stopped, and gave a certain signal, to unload the carriage without further orders, as well as to carry the luggage up stairs. If nothing occurred on that side of the street, he was to cross over to the left, and repeat the same manœuvre.

The plain truth is, my dear madam, I have long since made up my mind, that, the only true friends we have in the world are the women-kind, and I never was in a difficulty during the long course of my operations, without applying to that unfailing source of comfort and consolation, and, I may say, without being once disappointed.

I was now bound on discovering a suitable subject on which I might operate; one not too young, for what favour could a man of my years expect from youth and beauty? and not too old, for the old are generally cross and spiteful, and such were not the materials from which I could spin a good mattress and a moderate supply of clean linen. I sought for a buxom tidy widow, or wife, about thirty-five or forty, for that is the grateful age, with blue eyes if possible, a sweet smile, and a general *ensemble* of good-nature.

I went down the High Street at one side, and up the same street on the other, without finding anything that suited my book, though I looked sharply at every daughter of Eve I saw within each shop door; and I was sorely beset with doubt. I

repeated, however, the manœuvre, and I had not gone many yards on the second turn, when I beheld a full and portly dame, chatting with her husband, and playing with her child, who was the very object I sought for.

She was at least eight-and-thirty, but she might pass for five years less; she had mild blue eyes, fair hair, soft skin, and a rose-bud complexion, with lips like two cherries, and a general expression of goodness that won my heart at once. Her husband was a well-favoured cheese-making soul, about fifty, with a look of curds-and-whey, which showed that whatever the fair dame said was law to him.

Stopping the carriage, and giving a hint to the driver to be on the alert, I jumped out, and with much respect, and a certain easy frankness, walked into the shop, pushing the half door gently before me with the air of a friend who knew the ways of the house.

"Ah, madam," said I, taking off my hat and making a low bow, "what beautiful eyes you have! I am sure that such fine eyes indicate a good heart —Is it not so, Signor Marito?"

"Why sir," said "curds and whey," all taken aback, "my wife has, you see, most expressive eyes, and I can answer for the excellence of her heart."

"I thought so, caro signore, and for that reason only I address myself to her, and to you."

The wife blushed and seemed uneasy, but I saw at a glance that she was not displeased—what woman

at forty ever is, when the compliment to her person is well applied?—and she said—

"We have little in our power, Mr. Stranger, to offer; but what can we do for you?"

"The fact is, cara signora, I am a stranger in Codogno; I know not where to lay my head this night, as all the inns and lodging-houses are occupied by the army, and unless you consent to take me in, like a good Samaritan as you are, and give me a bed, a sofa, or let me sleep on the floor, I must lie in the fields and perish with cold."

I saw looks interchanged between husband and wife. His said "no;" hers said "yes;" so that taking the matter as settled, in one second I gave the signal agreed on to the coachman; in one minute the luggage was on the shop floor, and in another twinkling of an eye, with a few *caros* and *caras*, it was going up the staircase to an excellent chamber, with a most comfortable bed.

I have often wondered since at the coolness and courage which I assumed on this occasion, and the effrontery it required to take a man's house by storm; but who will sleep in the streets if he can get a bed, and is not soft sawder as ready change as coined tin? This I consider to have been my *cheval de bataille*—my master-piece, my *capo d'opera*. Who but myself would have arrived in a town close on nightfall, without knowing a single person in it, with every bed taken by royal orders, and have still

found a most comfortable home, and, as the result proved, a hearty welcome?

But human nature, or *natur* as Sam Slick says, is the same in all countries, in Nova Scotia, and in Lombardy, at St. John's and at Codogno. My host and hostess overwhelmed me with kindness, and hoped I would remain with them for several days; but I told them my movements depended altogether on those of the King, and that I must stay or start with him.

I got some refreshment at the Hôtel and then returned to "my happy home," as O'Connell used to say, and found the signor and signora prepared to receive me, and delighted to have a long gossip with the English stranger.

I know not how it came to pass, but these good people took it into their innocent heads that I was a great man, and so they made up their minds to establish their fortunes by my aid. They had been, it seems, the principal vendors of lottery tickets in the town before the revolution, but by one of the turns of the wheel of fortune which they had not contracted for, they had lost the place. Now, if I would be so kind as to say a word either to Charles Albert, or to Field-Marshal Radetzky, the bureau would be restored, no matter which side won.

I promised, of course—would it not be cruel not to have done so?—and I sent them lovingly to bed, the fair dame enchanted with her lucky hit, and the honest good man more than ever convinced, that the

fine eyes of his comely wife were the harbingers of an excellent heart. I discovered next morning why it was that my host and hostess made me their confidant, and reposed such reliance on my power as well as good will.

It appeared that the British minister had arrived, or was expected to arrive at Codogno, and the lively imagination of "curds and whey," and the innocent mind of the blue-eyed dame, concluded, that if not actually the ambassador himself, I must be the principal secretary, or something of that kind. Though the word "excellency" is common at Naples and Rome, in Lombardy they are not so prodigal of it, and as the title was every moment bestowed on me by both man and wife, it was evident that they took me for a great man, as I am in point of fact.

To this vague notion I owe, no doubt, the cordial reception given by the cara signora, and the prompt submission to his cara, of the signore Marito. Had I not touched upon the soft blue eyes, and the excellent heart, and suited the smile and the sigh to the words, I should not have succeeded; and in despite of appearances, I maintain that I won my combat of Codogno by the lucky choice of "fat, fair, and forty," and that soft unctuous style, which an Irishman at a loss for a bed is ever ready to assume.

Had I been five-and-twenty, attractive in person, face, and manners, my village conquest would not have been a matter of surprise; but I wish, dear madam, you could see me—round and jolly to be

sure, but as ugly as an elderly gentleman can well be, and without a single remnant of those qualities, which, in early youth, made "Our Own," before he was "Our Own"—but "a young man about town" —a special favourite in the drawing-room, ahem!! Then indeed you would be astonished that woman's weakness can be so easily won, and that at fifty, a few words well applied, are as efficient as they were at thirty.

Trust me also, dear madam, that when the poets called the age of forty in your sex, "the grateful age," they understood human nature well. A woman at that period has not abandoned all hope of making conquests, though her glass is too faithful a mirror for her years; and a sigh, and a smile, and "how lovely!" have a miraculous effect. I compared my *belle* to a Codogno cheese, soft and juicy when quite ripe, but destined to have a hard and tasteless covering in the course of a short time. The young ladies of the same place, to carry the simile further, may be likened to cream-cheese, or fresh Strachino, melting to the palate, and odorous to the smell; the middle-aged become like ripe Parmesan; whilst the old are regularly honeycombed and hard-crusted, and gladly disposed of to the first bidder.

Mr. Abercrombie did arrive next morning from Turin, and after seeing the King, proceeded at once to the head-quarters of Radetzky, but it seems that the manner in which he proposed that the armistice should be drawn up, was not agreeable

to the Field-Marshal, and unable to do anything satisfactory, he returned to the capital.

I know not whether the part played by our minister in the Lombard war was as straightforward and upright as official documents assume it to be. If he personally was moved by the same hatred to the cabinet of Vienna, as influenced our Foreign Office, or if he was as desirous of seeing Italian independence flourish, as the mission of the Earl of Minto, Lady Mary Abercrombie's father, proposed it should, I wonder what his feelings were on finding Charles Albert reduced to this low ebb, and compelled to sue for terms from an enemy whom he had calumniated and despised.

After our minister's departure for Turin, I visited all the posts occupied by the Piedmontese troops, and I was delighted with the rapid improvement which abundant rations and a good night's rest, had produced in the moral and physical condition of the men. They were no longer the low-spirited and depressed soldiers, worn out with fatigue and hunger, that I saw at Cremona, but a vigorous and hardy corps, ready to spill their blood for the honour of the cross of Savoy, and for the cause of national independence.

I have been since told, that though the men I saw were full of hope and resolution, they formed but one half of the army that retreated on Goito, and that in fact there were present not more than 25,000 men, to face the pursuing enemy of

30,000 or 35,000 strong. The guards, the cavalry, the artillery, and the Savoyards, remained as firm as a rock, but in all the other divisions, desertions on a large scale had taken place, and none but the old tried soldiers were faithful to their colours.

These are family secrets known only at the time to the chiefs of the army, and strangers are not allowed to compare the muster-roll with the numbers present, but all I can say is, that the fine fellows I saw spread in companies on the pasture grounds of Codogno, were in first-rate spirits, and burning to engage the enemy.

Codogno was not a strategic point, and Lodi, to which place we were about to move, was classic ground; and the river Adda, a deep wide stream easily defended; but it was not defensive, but offensive operations I asked for, and I think Radetzky would have been much astonished, if we had rushed upon his centre, and made him feel what cold steel was. Every yard of the ground was open to cavalry, or to the play of our magnificent artillery, and I should like to have seen the effect produced by an unlooked-for attack on the systematic advance of the phlegmatic Tedeschi.

Had a great captain been present he would have done something of the kind, but Charles Albert, brave as a lion in his own person, and rash to audacity in the field, had a strong reluctance to undertake these hardy *coups*, and, as we have seen during the whole campaign, he counted time as

nothing in his operations. It was this that the Duke of Savoy meant when he said to me "*N'est pas, monsieur, que nous sommes mal ménés?*" and so I thought as well as he, though I declined putting much faith in princes whose fathers were alive.

Had the young Duke been Commander-in-chief, uninstructed as he was in the science of war, we should have been masters of Lombardy and Venetia to-day, for it was the dashing *en avant* we wanted, and not the timid caution that allowed a beaten enemy time to recruit his numbers and his strength.

In fact the secret history of the last days of this campaign will never be known, as the King was not a man to give his whole confidence to any living person; and even when he was most frank, there was an undercurrent of intrigue at work, of which you could not trace the due direction.

The enemies of Charles Albert say, that a secret compact was entered into between the King and Radetzky, at Goito, after the failure of the last attack on Volta, and that all the subsequent phases of armistice, and sham fights, were got up to blind the world.

I thought so at one time, but I have received almost positive proofs to the contrary, and I now believe that the close of the campaign can be traced to a wise determination on the part of Charles Albert, to regain his own frontier with his artillery and the flower of his army; and to the prudent policy

adopted by the Cabinet of Vienna, recommended by the Field-Marshal, to maintain the Sardinian monarchy, and to spare its military force as the only means by which its existence could be secured from the rude and treacherous attacks of the republican conspirators, who, at Genoa, Chambery, and Turin, held an active correspondence with the Socialists of France and Germany.

We must not omit, in calculating the varying chances of this campaign, to take seriously into account the influence of the Socialist partisans. From the day Charles Albert imprudently declared war, to his return to Turin, his operations were paralysed by that evil demon. It was by its machinations he was prevented from at once advancing to the Adige; it was by it he was worried at Milan; and it was by the base agents of the faction, that the spontaneous movement of the whole Italian people was suppressed.

The Radical journal at Milan did infinite mischief to the cause; the open conspiracy at Genoa actually stopped supplies, by the terror the party inspired; the generous movement of Pio Nono was paralysed; and by its avowed conspiracy at Naples, the aid of the King of the Two Sicilies was withdrawn.

When the faction declared that Bologna and Ferrara must be stripped from the Roman States, to form the new republic of Upper Italy,—and when the deputies of the island of Sicily came to Codogno to offer the crown of the Trinacria to the Duke of

Genoa, what became of the national co-operation? Were the Papal Sovereign and the King of the Two Sicilies, to aid the spoliators of their dominions; and could any other result take place but the destruction of the principle of independence—the ruin of Charles Albert—and the triumph of the Imperial arms?

CHAPTER XIV.

THE RETREAT *(continued)*.

I CONTRIVED at Codogno to secure a little carriage for Lodi, partly by the kindness of a Savoyard surgeon attached to that brigade, and to whom I offered, of course, the vacant place. From this gentleman I heard a great many details of the affair of Goito, in which his brave countrymen so gallantly distinguished themselves; and he assured me, at the same time, that the brigade would have carried the position, even on the third attempt, if they had been properly supported by a few field-pieces.

He did not mean to say that the Piedmontese artillery had not done its duty—his meaning was anything but that; but what he sought to express was, that the plan of attack was badly arranged by the Commander-in-chief, and that it failed, because the Austrian cannonade was not efficiently replied to.

When the Doctor discovered I was the writer of the articles on the war, that had been copied from

the "Galignani" into the Piedmontese and Chambery papers, he was delighted beyond measure, as it was the first time he said that full justice had been rendered to the brigade. He had received several letters from his home calling attention to the subject, and requesting him if possible to make acquaintance with the correspondent of the "Times."

All this, of course, was very gratifying; for between you and me, dear madam, authors and women have about the same share of vanity allotted to them by the compounder of human nature. No compliment, if it be well-turned, can be too gross, they say, to the fair sex, and I have rarely met a literary man who had not a most capacious swallow.

How wise has been the dispensation, which causes such a comfortable defence against the slights given to fading beauty, and the wounds caused by neglect, or, of course, unmerited criticism. You might as well say to a woman of forty that she was downright ugly, as to tell an author that his book was a failure; and it is about the same offence not to ask the one to dance, who comes prepared for conquest to a ball, as it is to own to the other, you have not read his work, about which he hopes and believes all the world is thinking.

I say it is a wise dispensation, for women would drown themselves in the next river, if self-delusion did not exist, and what but the greatest mental complacency can induce a man to risk all the pains and penalties attached to publication. For the former

there is no consolation except in prayer, cards, or scandal—but for the latter there is the hope that the tide will turn in his favour, and that gold dust may be found among the sands.

I was consequently grateful to all Savoy for having quoted my words, as Savoy was to me for having eulogised its valour, and so I and my fellow traveller went on most comfortably together, till the spires of Lodi came in sight, and we entered the street, where "the maid of Lodi [never] sang to me" —nor in my conscience do I believe she did to my celebrated countryman.

The same difficulty which awaited me at Codogno, presented itself to my mind in entering this city, on seeing that it was overflowing with Piedmontese troops; so turning round to the surgeon I said—"Of course, doctor, you have a billet, and can get me a bed;" and great was my indignation to find that he was only a medical volunteer, and that he had no rights whatever.

"Well, doctor, recollect you belong to the army in one sense or another, and therefore you must find quarters for yourself, and me if possible—I give you one half hour for action, and at the end of that time I will take the matter in hand for myself only; for I have no idea, I, a stranger, of acting pioneer for you, who may be said to belong to the country, and who have both civil and military claims."

The doctor said he would do his best, and he went

to the surgeon-general, to the hospital, to the officer commanding his brigade, and returned as wise as he set out.

"Well then, doctor, take care of yourself: coachman, unstrap the doctor's portmanteau, and lay it down there. Adieu *caro*, we shall meet to-morrow."

I then gave to my driver the same order I had so successfully practised at Codogno, and passed up the street on the left hand, and down the street on the right; but I protest I could not meet a face that pleased me, though young maidens and old women were most abundant. I began, in fact, to think that there was no middle-age purgatory for the fair sex at Lodi, and that women went, "*per saltum*," from one extreme to the other, from twenty-five to fifty, or from heaven to ——: but you have ears polite and I do not name it.

I therefore moved on to the second next street, and there I saw, standing at the shop-door, my *beau idéal* of the fair sex, so far as my present object was concerned. Round, plump, juicy; blue eyes, fair hair, bright complexion, ruddy lips, white teeth; over, not under, forty, but so well-tempered in every look and feature, that I saw at once a bed was found.

Off therefore I sprang from the carriage step, and hat in hand, and with such a smile as Satan gave Eve when he presented the apple, opened my favourite speech.

"Cara signora, these beautiful blue eyes announce an excellent heart."

"Pray sir, what are my wife's eyes to you," screamed a peevish old man whom I had not before noticed, bustling forward, and looking worse than angry, for he was beyond redemption, and his fate had long since been sealed.

"My carissimo signore, your friend the Podestà of Codogno, desired me to come directly to your house, on my arrival at Lodi, with his best love to you and the signora, and to request that you would accommodate me with a bed for one night only."

I said this to the husband, accompanying it with a most assassinating glance at his comely wife, by the approval of which, "seen more by the eyelid than the eye," I knew the field was won.

"We have no bed," said the husband.

"You forget the spare room on the third floor," smiled the dame.

"Blessings on your blooming face," thought I, so without more to-do I gave the signal to the coachman, and without leave or license in a trice, he was crawling up stairs with my portmanteau on his back to the *terzo piano*. The husband was dead beat, and the wife was in ecstacy at seeing the old man so completely done; but as I stood my ground unblushingly, he at last gave in, and showed me up stairs himself.

There was no man-servant, or big dog, in the house, or else I should have had to fight them both;

but the poor old man was alone, and had no aid save that of his help-mate, whom I had contrived to gain over to my side with such slight means. My age and sedate appearance served me on this occasion no doubt, for what husband, even the most rabidly jealous, could have any dread of me? but I had to deal with a man who was jealous of all the world, a line from Sir Peter Teazle will tell you why.

The peevish old fellow did not turn out quite so wicked as he looked, and he paid me more than one friendly visit; I could not well understand whether it was to look for his *cara sposa*, or for me, but it was a polite attention to me no doubt, for what of course could have brought *her* to the third floor?

The maid-servant was a fine bouncing lass, who laughed heartily at the adventure, and entreated me to plague the old man by paying marked attention to his wife, but I would not even for a good joke compromise my principles, and I lost, I fear, the favourable opinion of both mistress and maid by such delicate conduct.

In the course of the evening I was favoured with a call from the Savoyard surgeon, who had learned my address from the coachman; and who now entreated me to use the same influence to procure a bed for him, or allow him to stretch a mattress on the floor. I distinctly refused, as I had previously declared that I would not assist him, and he went away in very low

spirits. I discovered next day, that having failed in every application elsewhere, he had contrived by the good-will of the wife and maid, to get smuggled into the kitchen during the night, where he was honoured with a blanket and a pillow.

Seeing that I made no attempt to interfere with his domestic felicity, the Lodi gentleman accompanied by his comely dame, paid me a visit in my room, and I contrived, by detailing the latest news from the camp, to win his good opinion, and the almost avowed sympathy of the signora. He was cheese and silk mad, and thought a Lombard cow, and a Lodi silk-worm, the finest objects in nature; but she had an Italian heart, and she was in raptures when I borrowed a page from my friend the poet at Valleggio, and predicted better times.

I saw, however, that the patriotic dame would prefer to hear that the Italian cause had triumphed elsewhere, and not at her own door; and she became very uneasy indeed, when the neighbours came in to say that Charles Albert had resolved on fighting there. I knew the King had said so, but that he would not be so unwise; and I gave to my good host and hostess some trite reasons which satisfied them.

In the course of the evening I discovered that at a certain point a noble Marquis had either mistaken, misunderstood, or disobeyed orders, and that already the Austrians had crossed the Adda between us and

the Po; and of course I assured my friends, that within twelve hours Lodi must be evacuated.

If I am not much mistaken, this intelligence pleased both man and wife; the one, because he *was* an Austrian in his heart, and the other, at least so the bouncing maid told me, because she *had* an Austrian in her heart. Moreover the contest that might have taken place at their very doors, was indefinitely put off, and it was pleasanter to sleep in peace, even with Tedeschi bayonets at the door, than to have war and all its horrors raging day and night.

Certainly the attitude of the Piedmontese was most belligerent, as the whole force was stationed so as to defend the river, occasional shots were exchanged from one bank to the other, and the burning of the wooden bridge, "the Bridge of Lodi," gave a strong and painful interest to the scene. This last act was, as the result proved, one of useless mischief,—for as the city was not to be defended, why destroy the bridge? but men are like children, fond of playing at war, and what would war be without an explosion.

I saw my confidential friend, who assured me at one moment that the King was determined to fight; then he soon after came to withdraw his words, on account of the *contretemps* at Crotta Dadda, and he recommended me on the occasion of his second visit to lose no time in getting on to Milan, unless I had made up my mind to place myself under Austrian protection.

I followed so far his advice as to engage a horse and carriage, but I determined to remain the whole night in Lodi, to see what the belligerent parties, now only divided by the river, really meant to do. I visited all the posts, and watched the gradual demolition of each arch and pier of the famous bridge; and having fully satisfied my curiosity, and played cicerone to my host and hostess, I retired to rest.

During the night I heard an occasional musket-shot, and more than once the explosion of a shell, but towards morning all was perfectly quiet, and when I did come down stairs, neither friend or enemy was to be seen, in the shape of a Piedmontese or Austrian soldier, and I literally remained alone with my glory. The Piedmontese had retired by the high road to Milan, the Austrians hung on their rear at a respectful distance; and the smoking ruins of the bridge, and "Our Own Correspondent," were all that remained of the "grand army."

My friends were glad that so far as Lodi was concerned, the war was at an end, and the old man went off to inspect his silk and cheese depots; whilst I remained chatting with the comely dame, and won her good heart by praises of Italian beauty and Italian scenery, and with a few adroitly turned compliments to herself.

There are some women who, virtuous and of strict principles, are yet so benevolent by nature, that an impression is easily made on their sensibility;

Donna Liberata was a lady cast in this mould, and I have the vanity to believe that I made a conquest. I do not mean a conquest in the ordinary sense of the word, as I have long since retired into private life, and bought a winning ticket in the lottery of domestic felicity; but I mean such a victory as ensured me a hearty welcome to her house should I ever go to Lodi, not for the sake of vexing her "old man," which first procured me the *entrée*, but for the good temper I exhibited, the funny stories I told, and my very strange way of pronouncing Italian.

I called out the horse and gig, but neither, as usual, were forthcoming, as the Piedmontese had pressed every disposable carriage, and I feared that the last stage of the journey would be the most difficult of all. I consulted, therefore, the old man and his wife, and from the latter I received a hint which I put instantly into practice, and only by so doing secured a conveyance to Milan.

Sending, therefore, her husband to the next village, to hire or borrow a carriage for an hour, she advised me when once I had the driver well on the road, to place my stick on his back, or ask the first straggling soldier I overtook, to apply the point of a bayonet to his side, and laying at the same time before him twenty dollars for his master, with five *buona mano* for himself, give him the choice of being well thrashed, or spitted, or of taking me to Milan.

These instructions I followed to the letter, and

great was my coachman's surprise when I turned highwayman upon him, and asked for a ride to the capital, "or his life." He did not seem afraid of the stick, as I hesitated in using it, so beckoning a wounded soldier who was moving painfully along, I desired him to take a seat near me, and to swear by his bayonet, that whether I liked or not he would ride to Milan.

Thus coerced, the coachman moved on at a good pace, till we came to the rear-guard of the army that was covering the retreat. The soldiers fatigued with a long march, wanted in dozens to mount the coach-box and the roof, and I believe some half-dozen did make good their way, but the first officer I appealed to had the kindness to rid me of this incumbrance, and I made choice of another wounded man to sit on the top of the luggage.

The two sufferers were most grateful for this indulgence, as they were too weak to reach the capital that day, and would probably have fallen into the hands of the Tedeschi, but they rendered me a great service during the rest of the journey, which we had not calculated on, namely, that to the numerous applications made for places, I had only to appeal to the presence of the two wounded men as proofs of my good-will.

At length we overcame all the obstacles arising from the road being occupied by baggage carts, and the materials of a retreating army, as well as the interruption caused by the unwillingness of some

officers to have the order of the march disturbed; and the *Duomo* and well-known localities of the Lombard Queen, came rising to my sight, and in half-an-hour I arrived at the Porta Romana.

The coachman prayed and insisted that I should discharge him at the gate, as once within the bastions he might not be allowed to return; so counting into his eager palm the money for his master, of which, no doubt, he kept one-half, and the *buona mano* for himself, I entered once more with two *facchini* for my luggage, into the city of Milan.

CHAPTER XV.

MILAN.

It was on the ever-memorable night of the 23rd of March that I entered Milan, after the Austrians had abandoned it. On the 27th of April I followed Radetzky to the Minçio, and it was now the 4th of August that I returned to the devoted city, at the tail of the Piedmontese retreating force, and two days in advance of the victorious army.

In the short space of four months and a fortnight the fate of Lombardy had been decided, and the cause of Italian independence lost. The pursued had become the pursuer, the vanquished the victor, and Charles Albert, who left Turin as the sovereign of the Peninsula, was now in doubt if even the kingdom of Sardinia could be called his own.

Desperate as was this state of things, yet still a gleam of hope remained; and if the members of the Provisional Government had done their duty, if the people of Milan had been animated with the courage

which they displayed in the month of March, the cause of Italy might still have been saved.

A Piedmontese army, if not so numerous as it had been, yet ever loyal to its King, and eager to engage once more the enemy, with 150 pieces of artillery in hand, and a small but most efficient cavalry, was a strong addition to that native force, by which, according to Milanese boasting, the Tedeschi had been ejected; but I am sorry to say the spirit was wanting, and all the energy on which I had at one moment relied so much, was evaporated.

Instead of finding, after so many days' notice that the army was in retreat, the bastions prepared for defence, the gates closed, and the streets barricaded, I saw that a kind of *fête* was going on, and that the Milanese were out of doors to watch the arrival of the Piedmontese soldiers from mere curiosity only, and not with an idea of calling on them to co-operate in protecting the city.

I am not quite certain if all the members of the Provisional Government had left the capital at that early period, though I know the self-constituted body had resigned, and that a commission of defence had been composed, but one lot was as inefficient as the other, and if the popular feeling was strong, which I deny, there was no head to direct it.

Charles Albert was, I am told, struck with despair, when he saw the helpless attitude of the government and the people, and he enquired for what purpose

he had been called away from his line of retreat by Pavia, to approach Milan. He offered to risk everything once more, and to stand by the inhabitants to the last; but an officer, whom I knew personally, having reported to him that not a single armed man was on the bastions, the King clasped his hands in anguish.

Still as something must be done, the trees in the vicinity of the Porta Romana were cut down, and houses near the gate which would have served as cover to the enemy, were set fire to; but it was all in vain,—the troops stationed to protect that point, were turned, and forced to take shelter within the walls, and several pieces of artillery fell into the enemy's hands, the men being shot at their guns by the Austrian riflemen, exactly on the same principle, on which it is proposed to-day to diminish the efficacy of field-artillery, by sending light troops with long-range carbines to turn the pieces, and pick off the men.

It was the first time in this campaign that the manœuvre was tried by Radetzky, though if he had relied on it at Sacca, instead of answering cannonade by cannonade, he would not have suffered so severely as he did on that occasion.

I hope it will not be considered irregular if I say here, that seeing the wonderful effects of the muskets used by the *Chasseurs de Vincennes* at the siege of Rome in 1849, I called the attention of the public to the subject in my correspondence; but so little notice is paid to the writings of regular

contributors, that a topic which we originate is never seriously taken up until some titled name, or official person, affects to make a wonderful discovery, and then all the world is alive.

I went to Mr. Bairr's Hotel, "the Hôtel de la Ville," which I have ere this so highly recommended —but my kind friend, Captain Campbell, the British consul, insisted on my going to his house, under the protection of the flag, so warmly, that I could not resist. He veiled his hospitality under the well-assumed pretence that I might be useful to him, and to national interests, as whilst he was occupied in writing to Lord Palmerston, I might look after the numerous applications he hourly had from British subjects asking shelter and security.

The consul was a bachelor, and his apartment was measured for *no* wife and *no* children, happy consul! but the owners of the numerous other apartments in the magnificent palace where he lodged, had left their keys in his hand, and thus we were enabled to accommodate not only all English ladies who were afraid, but numerous *prima donnas*, and *prima ballerinas*, of which Milan at all times is full.

The fact is I did not behave as well as I should have done to my friend Her Majesty's consul, but he forgave me when all the row was past, and he laughed most heartily at my expedient for passing the time agreeably.

Having exacted that the porter of the palace

and his wife should be placed under my exclusive orders, I instructed them to admit no person whatsoever without my inspection and approval—save and except all young and pretty women belonging to the Scala, and who were known as notabilities for song or dance. No one from a minor theatre was admissible; nothing would suit my book but stars of greater and lesser magnitude; and so well were my ideas carried out, that I think our hotel contained for forty-eight hours, more syrens and more dancing nymphs, than ever before were collected together.

The English of course had a quarter to themselves, and they received all the care and attention that it was in our power to pay; but that was a labour of duty, what I liked best was the labour of love, and cheerfully did I provide for my sisters of the fine arts. I was delighted to do good to others, as well as amuse myself, and I had the greatest satisfaction in giving rooms to a relative of my young friend, the *maestro* at Valleggio, who with her husband and two children were terrified out of their wits.

I must say I had some splendid *prima donnas* in the list, and when I see the names of my inmates making *furore* at London, Paris, Naples, and Vienna, how anxious I am to know if they recollect the funny scenes we enacted at Milan; or the worthy old gentleman, who pronounced all to be genuine British manufacture, and saved them from imaginary horrors. I cannot say much of my *ballerinas*, there was not one celebrity amongst them; and what is a *danseuse*

who has not done something to astonish the world, either as a Taglioni, or Lola Montes?

Dancers should only be seen on the stage in their aërial costume—something between the goddess and the mortal; and I know nothing less attractive than a *danseuse* of mere flesh and blood, who looks like other women, and walks with her toes turned out, as if she had the *baton* of her master ever before her eyes. I have known most of the celebrities in that line, but Fanny Ellsler was the only person of wit and intelligence that I remember; the others were mere physical monstrosities, to be stared at when seen at a proper distance, but never to be regarded near at hand.

From three years old, the future wonder of the ballet does nothing all day long, but practise postures and foot-flappings, that are to give elasticity and force in future life. She is at one moment flinging one leg in the air as high as her shoulder, the next trying to sit down and yet not touch the floor; then she stands or runs on the point of her toe, or whirls one leg like the limb of a flail—and she calls that grace, and dancing, and the poetry of motion! What can be expected from such an education? and how can any man of intellect talk to a woman, who only knows how a *tour de force* is made, and whose whole time is spent in defaming nature.

Your *prima donna* is a different mortal—and even the least distinguished have something St. Cecilian about them. I defy any singer to reach a high

degree of perfection in her art, without great mental and vocal qualities—and Fodor, Pasta, Catalani, and Malibran were, as Jenny Lind, Grisi, and Cruvelli, are, all more or less intellectually gifted. Though the *artiste* be without scholastic forming, meaning that of the boarding-school or the home governess, still the poetry she reads and commits to memory is a kind of education, and from it, alone she must receive a certain share of mental culture.

The Italian Opera is framed on some classic or historical subject, and the person charged with learning a principal *rôle*, is compelled to inquire and study what it means. The great majority of the old and modern masters read profane or Christian history, to find materials for their libretto, and of course those who have to represent the passion of Semiramide, the sufferings of Anna Bolena, or the fatal loves of Marie Stuart, must consult the history of the period, in which the sorrows they express arose.

Not only does the *artiste* become acquainted with the lives of the great composers, but, to a certain degree, with the lyrical works of modern poets; so that the *prima donna*, as contrasted with the *ballerina*, is a being of a different order, and must ever hold a higher place, not only on the stage, but in society beyond it.

I fancy this dissertation is superfluous, and that all the world admits what I am so anxious to prove; but my object is not to show which of the two

artistical positions is superior, but why, during the short period in which I acted as *chargé d'affaires* for the British Consul at Milan, I did yield up my whole soul to the muse of song, and neglected the sister nymph most brutally.

We had a piano in the principal drawing-room, and of course we had solos, duos, and trios, in succession; but the curtains were always closed, and we sung *sotto voce*, because the mob might not like to have seen marks of a merry meeting in any house, nor to have heard our selections from the works of the great masters. We were all mirth and harmony at the foreign side of the palace, but, as usual, in the English quarter social differences ran high. Mrs. A. would not speak to Mrs. B.; and Misses C. and D. were quite astonished at Misses E. and F., taking the liberty to address them, and all wondered what Mr. Campbell meant in admitting such indifferent company.

The consul was sent for ten times a-day, but of course he was always engaged, and when I presented myself in his place, I promised everything and did nothing, which I believe is pretty much the way of the world in general.

There was one English young lady, who was neither mad, nor ill conducted, but who kept the whole house in commotion. I thought at first she was a strayed lunatic, but nothing of the kind; she had read French novels, and works on the rights of women, till her brain was filled by their stuff, and,

having a good income in her own right, she was travelling the world over, with a maid as great a ninny as herself.

This young lady, for she was so in name and family, was perfectly prudent in her conduct, that is to say her morality was not questioned, but she said and did exactly as she pleased, came and went without holding herself responsible to friend or relative, and was determined to continue that sort of life as long as the humour lasted. Her banker was well supplied, and all her payments made with the greatest regularity; but though young and very good-looking, she was as indifferent to the society of men, as to those of her own sex, and she went to *cafés*, *tables d'hôtes* and theatres, with the most resolute independence.

She paraded the streets with a tri-colored *bouquet* in her hand, even after the Austrians came in, and would have flared up with the coloured ribands in her bonnet, had I not prevented, or dissuaded, her from doing so. At least fifty officers dined at the *table d'hôte* at the Hôtel de la Ville; but she, the only lady there, insisted on taking her usual place, though Mr. Bairr intimated in his gentlest manner the impropriety of so doing; but when she came down with a tri-colored top-knot, he had to explain to the President that she was rather light in the upper story, and the following day he absolutely refused to let her into the dining-room.

As you may suppose, my hands being pretty full

of business, between getting information, writing long letters to the "Times," and managing the numerous visitors to our palace, I was not over well pleased to have this young lady to protect in all her fitful fancies; but go wherever I might she was in hot pursuit, to tell me this, to ask for that, or above all to procure the last French novel.

In order that all the good rooms should be at the disposal of our friends, I threw a mattress on the floor for myself in a little closet, and there, when wearied with hard work, I retired to take an hour's *siesta;* but my fair tormentor would not let me sleep, as she had just heard that a romance beginning with a great crime, and ending with a greater, where the father kills the son, the nephew the uncle, the mother poisons a whole brood of step-children, and everyone stabs everyone, had arrived, and find it for her I must on pain of her everlasting hate.

Fortunately when the armistice was signed I got rid of this dreadful plague, as she left Milan, declaring she would not remain in a city under Austrian protection. What became of her subsequently I really cannot say, though I more than once heard stories about an eccentric English young lady and her maid, which could only apply to her, for two such beings I am sure do not exist.

Previously to her visit to Milan, she had tormented British diplomacy in other Italian towns, and attracted the attention of the police by her extraordinary proceedings, but Miss Euphemia Grandison

was no fool, and though without one grain of common-sense in her composition, she had sufficient wit not to commit herself in a decided manner. She had a good heart and a charitable hand; and many an instance of her liberality was recounted to me by our porter's wife, who, nevertheless, had a mortal dread of the flighty stranger.

The porter crossed himself as she passed his lodge, and the old woman said one *pater* and two *aves* to keep off the evil eye; but still they could not deny that her donations were numerous and well timed, and that the Signorina might be very good, if she were in her right senses.

I have some reason to know that my eccentric acquaintance belonged not only to a respectable but to a noble family, but an education in a French *Pension* had been her ruin, and there she had imbibed ideas which made her laugh at public opinion, and live to please herself. One might suppose that such freedom of thought would be accompanied by a certain freedom of manners, and that license would follow liberty, but as far as we could ascertain, her conduct was above suspicion; though, if there was a secret to be kept, it was scrupulously guarded by her *femme-de-chambre*, who upheld her mistress's honour, and her own, in defiance of Piedmontese, Milanese, and Austrian intrigues, to entrap her into a confession.

When all hope of terminating the war in a favourable manner to Charles Albert had vanished, a

gleam of hope arose, from the belief that the republican government of France would not permit any further advance of the Imperial arms; and that it was just possible public opinion at Paris might compel the ministry to advance the army of the Alps.

I do not say that the King entertained any such ideas, as his subsequent conduct proved he did not; but undoubtedly the hope existed in a particular quarter; and whilst a courier was despatched to the next telegraphic station communicating with the capital, an attempt was made to gain time from the Field-Marshal, under pretence of demanding an armistice, in order that the subjects of foreign states might be enabled to remove their families and property.

The plan was well laid, but it failed for more than one reason—in the first place, Charles Albert defeated it, by signing, by means of commissioners in one room, the Salasco Armistice, whilst the consular body was waiting in another—and secondly, the French Government had, as Liston said, "other *fry to fish*," and it had resolved to let the *denouement* arrive at its regular course.

I was sitting about ten at night with Mr. Campbell in his drawing-room, talking over the adventures of the day, and preparing fresh matter for the morrow, when a great row was heard on the stairs, of boots, spurs, and sabres, and a Chargé d'Affaires of France, a French nobleman of high rank, with, I believe, some members of the consular body,

presently appeared, requesting our excellent friend to accompany them to San Donato, where the Austrian head-quarters were.

Mr. Campbell at once assented, and whilst a steed was prepared he put on his uniform, deeply deploring, however, that he could not find his sword, which, no doubt, some ardent Milanese patriot had borrowed for a nameless period. A sailor is not renowned for horsemanship, and Mr. Campbell had a particular objection to the exercise, so you may conceive his annoyance at now being compelled "to boot and saddle;" but duty to one's country requires even greater sacrifices, and off the equestrian party set, with a flag of truce, and a trumpeter to sound a parley.

The night was pitch dark, and a slight drizzling rain came down, so that the white flag was more for the honour of the thing, than for any practical utility; and as to the trumpeter, his lips were sore, and he could not blow a note.

Only imagine the condition of a party of peaceable men going in a dark night among the outposts of two hostile armies — their mission of amity, as indicated by the ensign, being unknown, because unseen, and no brazen voice being at their disposal by which the advanced videttes might be informed "hold hard, 'the Campbells are coming'—don't fire—don't fire."

The first evil was without a remedy, the second was alleviated, or rather aggravated, in this manner.

The trumpet and bugle calls of European nations are, like their idioms, weights, and measures, all different, and much opposed, save that beautiful "point of war," so familiar to our cavalry as the signal for night repose, which has been adopted in the Portuguese and, strange to say, Neapolitan armies. But in this instance the case was still worse, for the Piedmontese parley is actually, without the variation of a note, the Hungarian charge!

The French nobleman finding that the trumpeter could not sound, put the instrument to his own lips, and blew a blast that caused a shower of musket-balls to rattle about his and his comrades' ears, and proved that at Radetzky's advanced posts every one was on his guard.

"*Tau tata tati tie. Tie tati toti toe,*" blew the count.

"*Phiz, phiz,*" came the balls.

"*Tau tu ra ta. To tau ta re toe,*" repeated the trumpet.

"*Ran tum tan, ran tum tan,*" were heard the drums along the line, accompanied by another volley.

Still the party advanced—the trumpet sounding; the Frenchman swearing; and Captain Campbell being reminded of old times, when he assisted at a cutting out on the coast of Spain. Indeed he had some reason to complain, as a ball grazed his right arm, but fortunately its force had been spent against a tree, and he came off with a slight bruize.

I fear the flag of truce, and the whole party, would

have fared badly that night, if the Hungarian officer in command had not been a man of sense and *sang-froid*; for he, not finding that his fire was returned, decided that no enemy was at hand; and so, ordering his men to cease, he advanced himself, and speaking French, soon came to understand the nature of the mistake, and the object of the flag of truce. The whole party laughed heartily at the adventure, and I think the gallant Count will take care how he volunteers as trumpeter again, until he ascertains if *Parley* and *Charge* are not one and the same thing.

The consular body, flag of truce and trumpet, were conducted to San Donato, and shown to a comfortable room until the Marshal was ready to receive them; Mr. Campbell fell fast asleep, the Count and the Chargé arranged the political world according to their own fashion, and the trumpeter procured some salve to rub to his chapped lips.

After waiting nearly an hour, they were introduced to the veteran Commander-in-chief, who with the utmost courtesy, desired to hear the object of their visit. How the old fox smiled, well knowing in his heart what the real purpose of the application was; but he announced, that the assent he would have given, was now unnecessary, having just signed at the desire of Charles Albert, by means of his commissioners, an armistice, by which for the present at least, ended the war.

Whether the King played with two strings to

his bow that night, or whether he was cognisant of the flag of truce being sent at the same moment that his demand for an armistice was in progress, are secrets of state of which I have not the key.

I am aware that the King was partial to intrigue, and that he was quite capable of originating the double game; and from what I know of the bearers of the consular application, I should think they would not have taken such a step on their own responsibility. The case however presents an historical and diplomatic dilemma, for in point of fact there were no Nationals to be removed, the road having been for weeks, and still being open to those who wished to go away.

The application may have been made from an excess of zeal, or from an ardent desire to extricate the King by means of France from his humiliating position before Austria; but I should think the diplomatic delegates must have felt that they had either badly judged the case, or not been fairly dealt with, on seeing the King's commissioner repudiate all demands for delay, by signing the convention.

As to Captain Campbell, he went out to please his friends, he came back to please himself, a little lighter to be sure, as no one rides for the first time for twenty years without losing weight, and with the honourable marks of having been under fire, which none of his friends of the Provisional Government could boast of.

I have heard it said that the consular body was informed of the intention of the King to demand an armistice, and that its application was to be made in case the royal request was refused. This may be quite true, but I was not told so at the time.

CHAPTER XVI.

MILAN (*continued*).

I SHOULD not omit to render justice to the memory of the English officer of Lancers, the mad-cap of Valleggio, by stating that he distinguished himself under the walls of Milan by going as a simple volunteer to assist in repelling the attack near the Porta Romana. He had lost for the time both his horses, though he afterwards found them at Turin, and was thus disabled from doing duty with his regiment, but his brave heart was in the right place, and at the moment of danger he could not be restrained.

He came to my room after the defeat of the Piedmontese, and the capture of so many pieces of artillery, to give me the latest news, but I fear I was very ungrateful, for fatigued as I was with extra work, I was angry at being disturbed in a sound sleep, and the intelligence he gave would have equally answered my purpose next morning.

He was still more displeased at my ungracious

reception, and a certain coldness prevailed between us for some time, but he was too good a fellow to indulge *rancune*, and we met at Genoa as good friends as ever, and I had more than one letter from him in the course of his adventures and of mine.

The absence of his horses, and the robbery of his portmanteau, was a heavy loss to a young campaigner, particularly as his store of gold was contained in the same trunk: but what was his surprise to find some weeks after, on his arrival at Turin, his nags quite safe under the care of his servant, the so-called Radetzky, who had taken the Pavia road,—and to receive as I have before recounted, his napoleons from a friend who traced them to the much beloved old stocking. He flourished for a time at Turin, and at Genoa, on the strength of these resources, and then, poor fellow, he caught the fever and died, most sincerely lamented by the whole army.

The uproar that the armistice between the King and Radetzky occasioned at Milan surpasses all belief, and the mob who would not fight, and the popular leaders who never were seen under fire, gathered about the Casa Greppi, where the King was lodged, exclaiming "treason," and vociferating that they were betrayed.

Some of the most audacious forced their way to the King's presence, and most insolently demanded why he had deserted them. Charles Albert answered with the patience of a martyr, and offered, if he could be assured of the co-operation of the city, to cancel

the armistice, and perish with the people on the bastions.

This news was soon spread out of doors, and a momentary excitement was the result. A few barricades were raised, and some two or three hundred armed men marched up the Corso Orientale, crying out "*Viva l'Italia!*" "*Morte ai Tedeschi!*" and so enthusiastic did they appear, that I was humbugged into following them out of the gate to see their operations. What however was my astonishment to see them, instead of moving against the enemy, who was a short mile right a-head, turn left shoulder forward, and after ten minutes' display on the bastions, return again by the nearest gate.

The republican scoundrels who surrounded the palace, next got up a cry that treason was in the town, and that numerous Tedeschi agents were on foot; and more than one poor man, who had a fair complexion and fair hair, was sacrificed on the spot, amid the brutal exultation of the mob. I might have shared the same fate had I been in the neighbourhood of the Duomo and the Scala, where the largest groups were assembled; but my kind friend, the young *maestro*, grateful for the attention I had shown his relatives, ran to Mr. Campbell's to entreat me on no account to show myself in that part of the city. I was a marked man by the ultra-republicans, and a fit subject for suspicion on account of my innocent face; and as really nothing was to be learnt but what he could tell me, he begged and prayed

that I would keep within doors at least for the remainder of that evening.

I followed his advice, and I received more information from him than I could pick up for myself, as he knew all the leaders of the row, and was acquainted with their plans.

Charles Albert had not the same prudence, for on being called for by the crowd he went out to the balcony of the palace, and asked what more was required of him? But this call was a feint made by a band who sought his life, as a pistol-shot was instantly aimed at the King, the ball from which struck the pannel above his head. This act of violence was the consummation of infamy, and the ill-fated monarch and his suite withdrew from the balcony, and from the room that opened on it.

But just to show you how ignorant as well as wicked was that mob, no less than sixty musket and pistol balls were directed at the room, as if the late inmates could have been so stupid as to remain there to be shot at.

A guard of national defence, nominally for the protection of the King, but in reality to render him a close prisoner, was now organised, and his Majesty and the Princes appeared to have blindly delivered themselves up to assassination; but the spirit of the army was not extinct, and a simple and efficient plan was arranged to save them.

The King, finding that all his efforts to rouse the people to defend the city were unavailing, resolved

to leave Milan to its fate, and regain his own frontier within the period assigned by the armistice, but the moment the royal carriages for his suite appeared before the palace, the mob cut the traces, and upsetting them, plundered everything they contained, among which was a large sum of money, and several valuable and important papers.

The cash was divided, of course, among the robbers; but the papers I was told, were sent to Paris for publication; though as I never heard anything on the subject since, I presume that a different use was made of them, and that we shall one day or other see historical documents and original correspondence, obtained from an unquestionable source, appear in London or elsewhere.

Valuable papers were certainly then lost, as more than one application was made from Turin to Captain Campbell, to request his assistance in trying to recover them. Not only did Charles Albert, ere the acts of violence alluded to were committed, but the Duke of Genoa, and a French nobleman attached to the staff, address the populace from the balcony of the Palace Greppi, but all they said was thrown away on a mob of republican assassins, who had no other object in view than the destruction of the King, and of every member of the royal family.

In the meantime the audacity of the conspirators became so great, that the gardens of the palace were filled with armed bands, and a Piedmontese officer making his rounds, found a ladder planted against

the window of the King's apartment, and saw three or four bandits evidently in communication with others who had already gained access to the palace.

Under these circumstances there was no time to be lost, so general La Marmora put into execution the plan I have alluded to, and, bringing up a battalion of Bersaglieri, without beat of drum, and at double quick time, followed by led horses for the royal party, he dashed in amongst the coward crowd, cleared the square in an instant, disengaged the King and the Princes with their suite and baggage, and in a few minutes carried them beyond the Porta Vercellini on the high road to Turin, where the army was in marching order, only waiting the arrival of his Majesty.

The King's appearance was welcomed by a soft suppressed cheer, which savoured more of a heartfelt and audible prayer of thanks to heaven, than of a martial shout; but the Piedmontese soldiers remained loyal to the last, and at that moment, when any other set of men might have complained of the errors that had been committed in the disastrous campaign, they were more than ever devoted to their sovereign.

Those brave fellows, who, through the war, had despised the Milanese, had been with difficulty restrained from sacrificing the crowd of poltroons and assassins who threatened the King's life, when they heard what was going on near the palace; but still they were obedient to discipline, and trusted

implicitly to the good faith of the officers who told them that Charles Albert in person would march at their head that night.

The word "*avanti*" was given as soon as the King arrived, and early the next morning the Tessin was passed at the well-known bridge of San Martino.

I have no doubt the King returned sincere thanks that morning to the great Disposer of all human events, that the lives of his brave sons were spared, that the honour of the army was unstained, and that the chivalrous spirit which had led the Piedmontese gentry to follow him to an unwilling field, remained equally loyal and devoted at this trying moment.

I am likewise convinced that the army, conscious of having done its duty, and borne victory to the very gates of Verona, was well pleased to tread once more the native soil, and leave the ungrateful Milanese to the castigation they so well merited.

I am far from saying that the love of national independence, and the strong desire of seeing the Austrian monarchy effaced in Lombardy and Venetia, existed no longer in the hearts of the men; but their own homes had now charms for them paramount to all other considerations, and the superior officers felt that their presence was required in Piedmont and Liguria, to counteract the public defiance and secret intrigues of the vile republican faction.

Several thousand Lombards followed the retreating army, or took refuge in Switzerland. Radetzky had with the most exact punctuality maintained all the stipulations of the armistice, and even after the limit of time assigned was expired, gave facilities to emigration.

As my position was changed by the armistice, and as the Austrian Commander-in-chief had no longer the rights of a belligerent towards a non-combatant British subject, I determined to remain some days at Milan to see the entrance of the victorious troops, and to observe how the unflinching patriots would conduct themselves.

Captain Campbell insisted on my still occupying an apartment in his house, and enjoying the protection of the flag, and so I remained, in my heart not too well satisfied at the termination of the campaign, as however much I despise the republican faction, and speak lightly of national enthusiasm, I think that freedom is the birthright of us all, and that the occupation of Italy by Austria, is a disgrace to the civilisation of the age.

It is impossible by any process of time, intermarriage, or social relations, to amalgamate the two nations. Oil and vinegar are not more opposed, and never to the end of ages will you find in Lombardy any class but that of the conqueror and the conquered. Austrian intelligence may develope the resources of the country—it may bind the great cities by wide-spread railways—it may increase

production, enlarge trade, and, in short, ensure material prosperity more than the Milanese themselves are capable of doing; but the national antipathy will remain unchanged, and the lamb will never lie down with the wolf.

Let any unprejudiced stranger hear the two languages spoken by separate groups in the same place—let him observe the tone and manner of Austrians and Italians at separate tables in the same coffee-room—let him regard the difference of forms that exists in *salons* frequented by each nation, and I will then ask him if it be possible by any human procedure to mould such opposing materials into one substance.

Whether the German comes as a friend, or an enemy, his presence is equally undesired, and even, though the full value of his individual character be admitted, his national coarseness, bluntness, frankness, or sincerity, call it by what name you please, is hateful to Milanese society.

I know the Italians now, after four years' acquaintance, in every part of the Peninsula, with metropolitan and provincial manners, and though I am cognisant of all their faults and weaknesses, I consider them to be the most amiable people in Europe, gay as the French, dignified as the Spaniard, lively as the Portuguese, inferior to the English in steadiness of purpose only, and I see no reason why any portion of them should be devoted to never-ceasing slavery.

The Austrian master will not release his grasp

over so fertile and productive a possession, and he may boast that he confers material benefits on the great body of the people; but we can never sufficiently deplore that when the opportunity of an arrangement presented itself, England did not throw all her weight into the scale, and create, or revive, a nationality bounded by the Alps and the two seas.

I do not pretend to say that the establishment of an Italian kingdom under one crown is possible, or that the shades of difference, and the motives of jealousy which at all times prevailed between the several portions of the Peninsula, do not exist to-day, but I think that no part of that fine country should bend under the yoke of the stranger, or that the children of Italy should quail beneath the rod of the Tedeschi.

The spirit of nationality is not dead in any part of the Peninsula, it beats as fiercely at Naples as in Piedmont, in the hearts of the noblest as well as the most humble of society, and though the sovereigns who had withdrawn from the movement in 1848, did so because their own security was endangered by the socialist and republican factions at Naples, Rome, and Florence, the feeling remains as powerful as ever, and the truth of what I say will one day be manifested.

The people of Italy who take the trouble of thinking about me, or who have read my strictures on the events occurring in each capital during the recent eventful crisis, believe that I am an enemy

to their independence, and an advocate for Austrian rule, but never were honest men more mistaken in their lives, and never was more injustice done to the opinions of an individual.

I wish to see respected the rights of the several sovereigns to their thrones, in the hope that each will see the propriety of imitating the conduct of Sardinia, where the experiment has fully succeeded, and allow the people a constitutional interference in the direction of the common interest. I live in the hope that Lombardy and Venetia will yet be free, but I will never cease to expose the vile machinations of the infamous socialist republicans, who sapped the foundation of the national cause in 1848, and who now seek, as they did then, to overthrow each particular dynasty.

I am anxious to prove that the same hatred to foreign dominion prevails in every part of Italy, amongst the rulers as well as the ruled, and that the terror of a greater ill, namely, revolution at home, has alone kept down that sentiment.

Let not the liberals as a party affect to engross the feeling; it is inborn in the hearts of all, even of the most aristocratic; and one of my very intimate friends, who fought against the mob at the barricades of Naples with a gallantry worthy of his high name, was indignant when I said a word in favour of the Austrians before him.

"I wish you, my dear fellow, to understand," said he, "and I pray you to make your countrymen

understand, the great difference that there is between fighting against Socialism at home, and supporting the Tedeschi domination in any part of the Peninsula. We are ready to spill our blood in the defence of our own Government, no matter what its views or faults may be, but we are also ready to march to Lombardy once more, and clear the land of the footsteps of the stranger."

In my opinion this officer spoke the sentiments of ninety-nine Italians out of one hundred, and if there be any who desire that foreign bayonets should still be seen, it is because they are sensible of their own weakness, and that persons of property in the Peninsula are too pusillanimous to risk their lives in a contest with the mob.

Had the campaign of 1848 been allowed to have followed its natural development, and Charles Albert not been thwarted by republican intrigues at Turin and Milan, as well as by the proclamation of Manin's Utopia at Venice, Radetzky could not have maintained his positions at Verona and Mantua; and had not the sovereigns and persons of rank and fortune, in all the other parts of Italy, been alarmed for the safety of their own thrones and property, the whole Peninsula would have risen *en masse*, and stifled in its rude embrace the small remnant of Tedescho domination.

These are facts that must never be lost sight of by persons who study the history of that period, and above all they must be carefully borne in

mind when another struggle for independence takes place.

Although to all appearance the domination of Austria is submitted to in Venetia, Lombardy, Modena, Parma, and Tuscany, every annoyance that can be *safely* indulged in by the government and the authorities, is practised; whilst the distaste of the people and society in general is openly avowed.

In the places named, the Austrian bayonets render all discussion superfluous, because every one admits that without those bayonets the native governments could not last a day. In the Roman States the dislike of the people is equally divided between the French and the Tedeschi; the hatred of the heart being more directed against the latter; whilst at Naples, though Austrian influence is said to be great, it exists only in name, and the resident minister is rarely or ever consulted.

I believe it is only at Turin, where the cabinet of Vienna is presumed to have no control, that its power and weight are truly felt and acknowledged. The interests of vicinage are multiplied and various, and the kingdom of Sardinia has a more direct interest in cultivating a good understanding with its powerful neighbour, than has any other independent Italian state. Socialist France might have terrors for Charles Emanuel and the youthful Constitutional system, but imperial Germany is a protection and a safeguard, as long as the Parlia-

mentary practice in Piedmont is confined to its legitimate occupation.

In my opinion the relations between the cabinet of Vienna and those of the different Italian States, are but little understood, and I am only prevented from dwelling on them more at length, from the dread of fatiguing a kind reader, who looks for something more amusing from my pen.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE AUSTRIANS AT MILAN.

THE enthusiasm, the violence, and the fury of the republican faction at Milan, evaporated on the departure of the Piedmontese, and the city began by degrees to assume its ordinary appearance.

All the persons seriously compromised, the more particularly those who in so base a manner had sought the King's life, fled in the rear of the brave troops they had so grossly insulted, or crossed the frontier of Switzerland, where many of them, to this hour, are endeavouring to disseminate their socialist doctrines, and ruin the canton of Tessin, as they did the provinces of Lombardy and Venetia.

The shop-keepers and the quiet-minded citizens however remained, confident that Radetzky's word, once pledged, would be inviolably maintained, and as he had declared that the town should not be pillaged, that the rights of persons and property

should be respected, they were satisfied that these conditions would be maintained.

I saw, therefore, very clearly that my mission, so far as the revolution was concerned, was at an end in this great city. Nevertheless, remembering the indignant patriots, the enthusiastic husbands, and half-crazed wives, who had sworn before me on their knees, in the month of March, that if the Austrians returned victorious, sooner than submit to their rule, they would bring their gold, their diamonds, and finery, as well as their children, to the Duomo, and there, setting fire to a great funeral pile, perish all together in one common ruin,—I supposed they would make a show of doing something of the kind, even for the sake of appearances.

Slowly and painfully, therefore, did I ascend the steps of that magnificent temple, and, as I entered the middle aisle, I saw something vivid on the ground, as if a young flame was then being nourished into a glowing fire. The torches are there, thought I, but where are the victims?

What a confounded hurry you Englishmen are ever in, and will not you give time to the charming devotees to make a proper toilette, and have their flowing tresses gracefully unbound.

Alas, Madam, when I came to the spot where the brilliant light was playing, I found that it was nothing more than a sunbeam which had penetrated through one of the stained glass windows, and was circling in a small gold and silver flame

over a marble grave-stone in the centre of the cathedral.

You know, that in the Duomo, as in nearly all the old Christian churches, the light is admitted from painted windows that crown the extreme top of the side and centre walls, and that nothing, save the rays of a setting sun, can be more brilliant than the gleams piercing the stained glass, which partially illuminate the body of the temple.

The effect is rather heightened than diminished by the quantities of wax tapers, which burn night and day near the sanctuary, as whilst their purpose is evident and fully seen, the ardent and many-coloured flame that descends from the ornamental crystal, has a sublime and mysterious presence.

It can, therefore, be imagined that the lambent gold and silver light which I saw glowing over the polished surface of the marble tomb, might be mistaken for that of a torch revealing the precious materials of which the funeral pile was to be composed—and though I was glad to find that the ladies of Milan had more sense, I still regretted that something like a demonstration was not taking place.

I lingered in the Duomo with the hope that a tragical display might be got up, even by subscription, but the numerous masses were said as usual in the little side chapels, the confessionals were provided with the ordinary number of priests and penitents, idlers came in to lounge, artists to examine, and the great cathedral was not set on fire that day.

Still in order to be quite certain that the families, from whom four months before I heard such professions of devotion, were still in town, I paid several visits, and found each and all at home, busied in domestic duties, with their lovers, or the last scandal, and considering the return of Radetzky as the most natural thing in the world.

"*Oh caro signor Inglese* how have you been? How do you like campaigning? Are not the Italians very brave, the *Prodi*? What did' you get to eat? Where did you lodge? Are you wounded? How do you like Radetzky? Prince Schwartzenberg is to be governor of Milan? You know he ran away with an English lady, we are all delighted with him; how foolish to run away, we never commit such absurdities. So Charles Albert is gone, and the Piedmontese army. I am very glad; what right had he to come here, and meddle in our affairs? You know we were happy and prosperous before the revolution, but now, ah *caro*, you would not believe me if I told you the sums we have paid. Thank God it is all over! Ah Signora Marchesa (to a lady who enters), delighted to see you; only think, this gentleman has gone through all the campaign, and has not been wounded. He says the Austrian officers are very handsome, and the Prince Schwartzenberg a demi-God. The Prince was wounded in the arm, is he better? What an absurd thing of that English Countess to run away with him; we don't do so at Milan. Do we, *chere Marquise?* The Austrians

make their appearance to-morrow. Oh! come to our balcony—I have the colours ready; one must make a little sacrifice of one's opinions on these occasions, and the Austrian Hussars are so handsome."

Such was more or less the conversation I met at every house, but no one was deceived. The Countess hated the Austrians in her heart, but it was not prudent then to say so, though that hatred did not go the length of inducing her, as she had formerly announced, to burn herself, her *bambini* and finery, in the middle aisle of the Duomo.

In the course of the day I visited every part of Milan and the suburbs, and was astonished at the order and regularity that prevailed. The hastily raised barricades were demolished, everything offensive to the German eye was removed, the *cafés* were all brushed up, flags and colours were prepared, and in short the Milan of three days before was no longer to be recognised.

To understand this change we must consider that all the most violent partisans had left the city, and that none but the peaceable and industrious inhabitants remained.

Let it not be supposed that the latter wavered in their opinions, or that the victorious Tedeschi were more acceptable at present than they had formerly been. No change in the inward man had taken place, general animosity and individual hatred were still the same, but the homely proverb says,

"we must make the best of a bad bargain," and on that doctrine the Milanese acted.

I thought at the time that the Lombard lords and adherents of the Provisional Government were wrong in deserting their country and property, as the Austrian rulers were never so well-disposed as at that moment to conciliation, and Radetzky was a practical man, who would not listen to passion or desire of vengeance; and I was also of opinion that the Commander-in-chief was unwise in affording such facilities to emigration, as vast numbers would have remained, had they been afforded a pretext for so doing.

These anticipations have been more than realised, as a constant drain of treasure has since been going on to Piedmont from the Lombard estates, whilst the proprietors have equally reason to complain that their rents are diminished, and heavier contributions than were ever levied before, are now imposed.

No doubt the Milanese absentees have been led to imagine, by the radical press of Turin and Genoa, that another Italian campaign would soon be organised, and that their position would be much improved by the fact that they had so long condemned themselves to a voluntary banishment, but that delusion is gradually fading away, and they now see that an excellent understanding prevails between the Sardinian monarchy and the Austrian empire.

As long as an immediate probability appeared of the political aspect of the Peninsula being changed,

it is natural to imagine that the emigrants would make the most of their personal sacrifices before the public, but as a long period must elapse before the regeneration of Italy can be again attempted, I am persuaded that the great proprietors will one by one return, and whilst avoiding all social intercourse with the master, profit by the security his presence affords, to cultivate their material prosperity.

During a late visit, I found that the relations between landlord and tenant were gradually losing their social excellence, and that the former was obliged to press more heavily than he formerly did as the occupier of the land. Not only do the proprietors' revenue and the tenants' profits suffer by this altered system, but the *prediale*, or government tax, falls off considerably, or is levied on the land and not on the landlord; and it will never suit Austrian policy to bring itself into unpleasant contact with the peasantry.

Early on the morning of the 6th of August, the Austrian arms were replaced on all the public buildings, and the various offices wherein the future affairs of the kingdom were to be conducted, were arranged; and every one who had business to transact, as I chanced to have, would have found the same old clerk with the same pen behind his ear, stuck at the same desk where he sat four months before, and the same important sub-director shaking the powder from the curls of his wig, in the same dignified style

he assumed before the late reverse of fortune; the same porter was seated in the same chair; the same big dog, wearing now an Austrian badge on his collar, crouched at his feet; and not one iota of change seemed to have been made in their *personnel*, or their ordinary habits.

At mid-day the martial band of the Grenadier guard, or the tight-braced drum of the line, was heard, and in a quarter of an hour the long *defilè* of some 30,000 men commenced.

The troops of every arm were in the most splendid order; they all appeared as if clad in new uniforms for the joyous occasion; not a speck was to be seen on their spotless white jackets, and their gaiters and shoes were well fitted and highly polished. It was impossible not to admire and not to applaud,—and involuntary exclamations burst from many a Milanese. "Oh, what magnificent men!" "Oh, what fine soldiers!"

I could scarcely believe my eyes, for I had seen grand reviews before the two Emperors at Vienna, Prague, and Teplitz, and never did the *élite* of the Imperial army in its gala uniform, look more soldier-like or more perfect in every respect, than did the fine fellows that now marched up the Corso.

There was no shouting, no noise, no demonstration of any kind. The beautiful music of each regiment played a favourite air, and the men kept time with that long step so peculiar to the German infantry,

as if they had turned out for parade in a favourite quarter. Each arm was perfect in its way; the artillery, the lancers, the hussars, the grenadiers, the line, and the jägers, and I don't think that a single man appeared whose uniform was not scrupulously clean, and whose accoutrements might not have undergone a most rigid inspection.

How the old Marshal contrived to follow up the pursuit of the Piedmontese, and keep his men in such high condition, is a secret worth knowing. It only shows what an admirable soldier he is, for none but a great captain will take the trouble to provide for the men out, as well as, in the field, and to give as much care to the comfort and even elegance of their uniforms as he does to the efficiency of their arms.

I must say that the Milanese conducted themselves admirably on this occasion; they avoided giving useless offence to the Austrians, on the one hand, and refrained from offering any base homage, as the people of Cremona did, on the other.

In like manner the Imperial troops behaved with the greatest propriety, no exultation of any kind was exhibited, and as the several regiments marched to their respective quarters, not a word was said, or a jest indulged in, that could offend.

Prince Schwartzenberg, appointed military governor, that day commenced his functions. He accompanied the troops along the Corso Orientale, his active and intelligent eye studying the

physiognomy of the town; and evidently satisfied with the result.

He stopped to ask a few questions of Mr. Bairr, the landlord of the Hôtel de la Ville, near whom I stood, regarding the number and quality of the strangers in his house, and in the other albergos, and when the *defilè* was at an end, took possession of the palace of the Government-house, where he gave, by his management at a very trying moment, a foretaste of those great talents which afterwards distinguished him as first minister of the wide-spread empire.

Within an hour after the troops were in their allotted quarters, Milan resumed its ordinary aspect. The citizens came to the afternoon promenade as usual, and the Austrian officers mixed with the crowd; but at that moment a line was drawn between the vanquished and the conquerors, which was not departed from when I left Milan, which remained in force on the occasion of two visits since, and which, I believe, will be respected as long as the occupation lasts.

I do not suppose that any agreement was made by the inhabitants, or that the leaders of public opinion recommended a system to their friends; but it seemed tacitly understood that in all public places where the Imperial uniform was seen, the Italians should either withdraw, or make a mark of separation.

It is the custom in fine weather for all the owners

of cafés at Milan to place chairs outside the doors for the accommodation of their *habitués*, and as the tables have space for many guests, the last comer, even though unknown, has no scruple in filling the vacant place; but if only one Austrian were seated at table, no inhabitant would approach the place; and a group of friends would pass over to another café, rather than be seen in such questionable society.

In like manner the Austrian officers, though habitually dictatorial in manner, avoided coming in contact with their unwilling hosts, and I have seen more than one pass by the table where Italians were seated, to select a spot where he was altogether isolated, or where he could unite with others of the same nation.

As I generally spent the evening with my warm-hearted friend Mr. Campbell, and as we were as anxious, as all other sojourners in Italy during summer are, to have an ice *al fresco*, we were often at a loss to choose a comfortable place. Here there were all Italians—there there were Austrians, and as his neutrality must be maintained, and mine was perfectly indifferent, it was not at every café we could be accommodated.

I think Mr. Campbell had a weakness in favour of the Italian cause, though he carefully avoided showing it in his official conduct, and he turned from the white uniform lest he should annoy his native acquaintance; but then he was well known to the Field-Marshal, and a private friend of Count

Walmoden's, and of course he could not "laugh at their beards."

In the end we arranged that the ice should be brought to the balcony of his drawing-room, and there under the wide-spreading British ensign, we indulged our palates, and looked down upon all the world, as one living in a first floor is permitted to do, on those who walk the streets.

With the same kind friend I paid many visits in the houses, where so much excitement prevailed both before and after the glorious days, in favour of the national cause; but I found that Milanese ladies are practical philosophers, and as the Piedmontese troops had not won their favour, why should they be offended that the white uniform had come back?

These high-born dames were as patriotic as ever, and assured me that if Charles Albert had not interposed, the Milanese would alone have driven Radetzky beyond the Adige, and that it was a shame to have terminated the war so soon before their levies had appeared in the field.

In fact they were as grandiloquent as their lords, and if fine words and rich embroidered colours could have won the day, certainly to them would have been the victory.

Of course I was not so rude, or ungrateful to *la bella prima donna*, Angela Borgnoni, as not to think of her on my return to Milan, or to neglect the duty of enquiring for her health. It is true that the thought of so decided a personage had become positively

hateful after the society of my gentle and simple-minded hostess of Valleggio, and that the admiration her beauty and talents once commanded, would, if renewed, be an act of treason to the calmer spirit of the innocent wife and tender mother, whose image accompanied me night and day.

How could I look on those ardent dark eyes with the influence of Donna Lucia's parting tears graven on my memory, or permit the pressure of real or factitious warmth on a hand, where the seal of my sweet friend's fingers was still impressed.

Although I was double the age of my young hostess, and though her heart was alone occupied by the sacred ties of domestic affection, I still could not help feeling so strong an interest for her, that I had become indifferent to the fascinations of the whole sex, and held in absolute horror such decided specimens of face, form, and mind, as Donna Angela exhibited.

I wish I were a metaphysician, to analyse the sentiments that oppressed me; for I was not such a fool as to be in love, and yet among the many female friends I have had the good fortune to find in the course of my adventures, I never felt for one the same share of devotion which I owned for the soul-subduing syren of the Mincio. I have, however, the good luck to be perfectly ignorant of all that your great anatomists of the human mind are so proud of understanding, and I think it no wrong to say, that though I was not in love with Donna Lucia, I was ready to defend her at the risk of my

own life, and I never was happier than in her innocent society.

Occupied with this train of thought during a solitary walk on the Bastions, I met an officer of Hussars who has since figured at Florence, in all the lustre of his brilliant uniform, accompanied by a lady rather given to *embonpoint*, but still of that magnificent style of form that always creates a sensation.

The lady's veil was down, as the day shone brightly, and her face was further concealed by a miniature sun-shade, but her person was radiant in one of the latest Parisian costumes, faultless from top to toe, the elegance of her *chapeau* being only equalled by the symmetry of the *brodequin*.

Such an apparition startles the most abstracted, and of course the usual effect was produced on me, but what was my astonishment, when the veil was thrown up, both hands clasped mine, and with a *caro, carissimo*—Donna Angela Borgnoni, late first of Italian patriots, and now enlisted in the Imperial service, stood before me.

The proud and handsome Hungarian did not understand these *caros*, much less the *carissimos*, and he began to twirl his moustachios with an indignant finger; but the *prima donna* presented me in form, satisfied the colonel in a few words, and then assailed me with a crowd of questions which it would have taken a week to answer.

Of course she gave me her address, and the olonel

hoped I would do him the honour of calling at his quarters, and I left the happy pair to continue their romantic promenade, whilst I raised up, by the force of imagination, the noble-minded Don Pietro, and the sweet partner of his joys, and placed them before me as a contrast to the gaudy exhibition I had just witnessed.

I saw the manly form of the husband, not, I must say, over-attentive to his young wife, whilst she, with her arms twined in his, the *bambini* playing at her side, seemed to realise all that the heart of man can desire in wedded life. His simple dress made a pleasing contrast to the fripperies and fopperies of the military beau, whilst her modest robe, marking the elegant symmetry of her slight person, her white Venetian mantilla covering her graceful shoulders, the *chapeau de paille* with a wild flower in it, which formed her head-dress, the whole effect being one of pastoral simplicity, made me soon forget the over-dressed paragon of La Scala.

Accompanied by these friends I walked on the Bastions as though by the Mincio side, again heard the rippling of the stream, the lowing of the cattle on the hill-top, strayed in the ruins of the Scaligeri domains, and spent another happy evening at Valleggio; this over, I returned to the hospitable abode of Captain Campbell, who laughed at the adventures of Donna Angela, and as I was sad and thoughtful all the evening, fancied that I was jealous of the Hungarian colonel.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE AUSTRIANS AT MILAN (*continued*).

DURING the period prescribed by the armistice, and even for some days subsequently, every facility was given by the Field-Marshal to persons desirous of leaving Milan; but when I came to seek a visà to my passport for Turin, I was flatly, and I may say roughly, refused.

I therefore asked Captain Campbell to accompany me to the great man in whose department my business lay; and on our names being announced, we were passed through a file of immoveable clerks, and ushered into his presence.

The appearance of our consul procured me a civil reception; but the same denial of a visà given by the deputy was persisted in by the chief; and he told me in as many words, that I should not leave Milan except by the road of Verona; and that once in that city, the authorities might send me to Vienna if they pleased.

Lord Palmerston had not at that time made his

celebrated speech, and the "*civis Romanus sum*" was not then in a state of maturity; but I was a British subject determined not to yield; and so begging Captain Campbell not to quarrel with the authorities on my account, I prepared to fight the battle in my own way. The dialogue, therefore, between the Austrian great man and "Our Own Correspondent" took something of the following shape:—

"Why will not your Excellency visà my passport for Turin?"

"Because, Monsieur, I have determined that no one shall take that road."

"I am an Englishman, and a non-combatant!"

"I know very well; but you were in the Piedmontese camp during the whole war."

"But the war is at an end; the armistice changes everything; and moreover I was in the one camp as I might have been in the other, merely as an observer!"

"We should have taken care of that; I would have sent you off as I did another of the same profession."

"Excellency, I am not so easily got rid of as you think; but why, when I ask to leave, do you now prevent me?"

"You may go, monsieur, when you please, but by the Verona road."

"I have resolved not to go to Verona."

"I am resolved you shall, or stay in Milan."

"I can understand there may be an objection to giving passports for Turin, so let mine be made out for Switzerland, and I can easily cross the Lake from Seste Calende to Arona."

"I also refuse that; in fact you shall have no other visà than that of Verona."

"I entreat your Excellency to reconsider what you say. I should be sorry to give your friend here, the consul, any trouble on my account; but as I have done no wrong, I am resolved to accept no punishment, and will not submit to an unreasonable order."

"We all respect and esteem your consul; and any application from him meets our best attention. Indeed, I consider that his presence here is tantamount to an application on your behalf; but my mind is made up, I will give no visà but for Verona."

Now, then, thought I, now or never; now for the grand *coup*. So calmly laying my Foreign Office passport, signed by the Earl of Aberdeen, on the table, I said, in my most courteous tones,—

"There, Excellency, is a letter which I have the honour to present you from Lord Palmerston; I will call for an answer in twenty-four hours."

The great man did not like the act, or the cool manner in which it was done; as to Captain Campbell, he was perfectly petrified; so taking up my hat, I made what I call my "Prince Metternich" bow, and with the solemnity of a "*tambour major*,"

took my leave. The great man came to the door with that high-bred politeness that distinguishes him, and Captain Campbell and I passed through the long double file of Austrian automatons who never raised an eye to look at the strangers.

When we were beyond the precincts of the palace, Mr. Campbell gave breath to a long pent-up sigh, exclaiming,—

"Are you mad, my dear fellow? and do you think Austrian generals are to be bullied in that manner?"

"My dear friend," I replied, "your brains have been muddled at Milan; you do not understand human nature. Don't you see that the great man was acting under general orders given by the Field-Marshal, which he dare not disobey; and that I have relieved him from a difficulty in giving him time to apply to the Commander-in-chief, who no doubt will make an exception in this particular case. I have been shot at, it is true, but I never did shoot at any one during the campaign; and if I spilled ink against the Tedeschi for four months, I never shed Austrian blood. The rule about passports was never intended for me; and so to show how certain I am of success, I will take a place in tomorrow's *malle-poste* for the first Swiss town beyond Como."

Mr. Campbell smiled an incredulous no; so we went to dine together, and we had a bottle of iced champagne to make it a merry parting.

Next morning at eleven the consul and I lounged

quietly to the palace; and on asking to see the chief, a secretary came forward, shook hands with Mr. Campbell, whom he knew, and inquired if I were that "bold boy" who would not go out of his way to please any one.

On being answered in the affirmative, he handed me my passport with the visà of Piedmont by Switzerland, and told me the General would esteem it a personal favour if I would go as far as Lugano; and taking a carriage from thence to the head of the Lago Maggiore, find my way to Arona by any of the steamers that plied every day. A request so worded could not be refused, and I promised exact conformity to it.

As we went down stairs, I reminded our consul that in the very same place I washed my hands of the Provisional Government, and that now I had succeeded against the Austrian dictator.

Captain Campbell, who was as bold as a lion on the quarter deck, has the usual consular respect for great diplomatic authorities, and therefore he could only express astonishment at my boldness.

"Always take care to be in the right, my good friend," said I; "never ask anything that is irregular, and you are certain not to be refused; a British Foreign Office passport, that is only used for legitimate purposes, is a talisman against which no witchcraft can prevail. Had I given way, you would have been reduced to a mere cypher at Milan. The great man equally dislikes Lord Palmerston's

epistles and 'our own correspondent' letters; but we are too strong for him, particularly when backed by so efficient a consul as you, my dear fellow."

The captain shrugged up his shoulders; for what I said was unanswerable; but he was not sorry to see me depart, as I was the only remaining obstacle to that learned leisure he was now about to relapse into; which, after fifteen years of quiet, had been first disturbed for the last few months.

A more kind or a better-hearted man than Captain Campbell does not exist; and I am very happy to hear that his position has been improved by better pay and promotion at Venice.

During the war on the Mincio he was charged with the whole correspondence from Milan; the consul-general, Mr. Dawkins, being resident at Venice, and I have no doubt that Lord Palmerston was well and efficiently served.

It was no easy matter to get at the truth, as the republican faction, disguised in its patriot's robes, made a dead set at Captain Campbell, in order that accounts such as they desired should be sent to Downing Street; as the Provisional Government, though too proud to ask favours, had a little hankering in the same way; and as the Piedmontese authorities were alive to the importance of standing well with the British consul. I did not fail on my part, during my stay with the army, to have a statement of facts prepared, such as he might understand, and I presume that compounding all

our accounts together, he was enabled to make a diplomatic dose which contained the essence.

Milan the magnificent, in the course of a few days settled down into the state of *half-mourning*, which it has since exhibited. The Duomo and the superb palaces of the numerous Corsos remained uninjured, and the municipality under Austrian orders took care that the streets should be maintained in the same scrupulous cleanliness; but the spirit of a great metropolis was gone, and the emigration of all the patrician families struck a fatal blow to its present and future prosperity.

I can imagine that such a change took place in Dublin by slow degrees after the Union was legally declared; but what occurred in Ireland partially, was done here by wholesale, and the Milanese nobility and great proprietors abandoned their palaces in town, and their estates in the country,—the former to be occupied by Austrian officers, and not unfrequently by Austrian soldiers—and the latter to be managed, as absentees' lands ever are, by agents equally ruinous to the owner and occupier.

Milan's domestic prosperity was caused by its own immediate resources, not being dependent, as Florence and Naples are in some degree, and Rome is altogether, on the presence of strangers. In fact there were only a few resident English in the city, and those who came to visit appeared but for a short time, and never fixed their winter quarters in it,

as they do in such amazing numbers in the south. The void therefore occasioned by the absence of the native prince, has not been filled up by any British *Milordo*, or Russian *Principe*, and Milan is exactly minus the sum now spent at Turin, or in Switzerland, or in such other places as the wealthy peers have thought proper to adopt.

The last military governor, a cousin of the prime minister, did all in his power to alter this state of things, and so very conciliatory was the Field-Marshal as governor of the whole Lombardo-Veneto kingdom, and Prince Carlo Schwartzenberg, as lieutenant of Milan, that on reflection many of the absentees were disposed to return; but another change of system has now taken place, and a mutual defiance, I am sorry to say, has been again engendered.

In Italy the state of public opinion may be judged by the favour or disfavour shown to the Grand Opera, and, taking that as a test, we find that the Scala, being an Imperial theatre, was closed for many months after the Austrians entered, and that since it has been re-opened, no Italians but those employed by the Government, dare appear there.

In a city where all visits are paid in your "*Loge*," this sacrifice can never be too highly overrated. The determination of the highest gentry is thus practically shown, and when I add that the Milanese middle classes, who are the most musical

in Italy, enjoying life only at the Opera, will not frequent the pit of La Scala, you can understand how deep-rooted the general feeling is.

Of course the manager cannot pay large salaries out of empty boxes, so that if you put together the sum abstracted by the emigrants, the money *not* collected, which would have been again distributed, at the theatres, and add moreover the distress occasioned by so many persons being thrown out of employment, you may form some idea of the total loss sustained by the industrious inhabitants in this great city.

The usual number of visitors has not fallen off, and Mr. Bairr's magnificent palace is always crowded, as well as the other principal hotels, but no estimate of general prosperity can be taken from one isolated source; and though the albergos are prosperous, the shopkeepers may want bread.

I should be most unjust to the Milanese, if I failed in admitting the many amiable social qualities they display, the high-bred politeness that distinguishes the nobility, and the courtesy shown on most occasions by the *bourgeoisie*. In all the minor relations in life they are estimable; it is only when they aim at being martial or diplomatic heroes that they prove deficient.

Years of slavery and of slavish thought, too much wealth and worldly prosperity, have rendered them apparently incapable of performing great actions; though at the same time they have a certain hauteur

and exhibition of outward pride, which those who have not seen them tried by difficult circumstances, would imagine proceeded from elevation of character. They fought during the four days with the most determined courage, but the sense of present danger having ceased with the retreat of the Austrians, they relapsed at once into their usual *insouciant* habits, and only made war by extravagant praises of the *Prodi* in the official Gazette, and by strutting about the Corso in most becoming uniforms.

Had Charles Albert entered Lombardy as a conqueror, the people would at once have submitted to his rule, and he might have ordered levies *en masse*, and procured any sum of money he desired. The exchange of an Italian for an Austrian sovereign would have been so sweet to every man's mind, that all other considerations would have been forgotten; but the King was neither conqueror nor ally—he was a *fusionist*, and whilst the various materials for preparing the mixture were compounded, the grand occasion was lost, and the supposed fusion resolved itself into a bitter and enduring hatred.

I wish also, whilst taking leave of the Milanese, to express my decided belief that none of the respectable citizens, or very few even of the lowest class, took part in the disgraceful scenes which were enacted at the Palazzo Greppi. The republican demagogues, assembled from every part of Italy—many from France—and a still greater number from Switzerland, were the perpetrators of those outrages,

and the would-be assassins of the King and the two illustrious Princes.

To that vile faction the disastrous result of the campaign on the Mincio was owing, and to its infamous proceedings in every part of the Peninsula, between the Alps and the two seas, we are indebted for the re-conquest of the Lombardo-Veneto; the actual and permanent occupation of the country down to Viterbo by the Austrians; the uncertain residence of the French at Rome; and not only for that array of foreign bayonets, but for the extinction of all immediate hope of seeing constitutional liberty extended beyond the Tessin.

In every place the Chambers, convoked by royal authority, endeavoured to sap the monarchical principle, and if the popular voice is not now heard directing or controlling the kingly government in Tuscany, Rome, and Naples, it is to that faction, and not to the violation of their engagements by the respective rulers, that the evil is to be attributed.

No one expects that despotic monarchs should voluntarily abandon power; but such a state of things is created, as was produced after the promenade of Lord Minto in Italy, and kings find it necessary for their future well being, to consult in a representative form the wealth and intelligence of their subjects; and when the people answer that call in a noble, patriotic, and loyal manner, as they have done to the manly appeal of

Charles Emanuel in Sardinia, a constitutional government is at once established.

But at Florence, Rome, and Naples, the wildest republicans alone took the lead, because the people not understanding what they were called on to perform, declined coming to the poll; thus we have seen that in two of these cities republics were proclaimed, and in the other the same result would have taken place, had the barricades of the 15th of May been triumphant.

The Italians of every district or state into which the Peninsula is divided, have an inborn right to representative government, and I am convinced that property and intelligence desire no other form but that of constitutional monarchy; but those who call themselves the regenerators of Italy, the Lucifers of this paradise, will not accept any other *rôle* but that of master, and all in one sense or other exclaim, "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven."

I am no advocate for despotism, and when the time comes, should the public demand revelations of what I saw, by encouraging me to write the sequel of my personal adventures in the civil war of Tuscany, the campaigns of Sicily, and the French camp before Rome, at all of which I was present, I hope to prove that I neither espouse or defend absolutism, though I am a devoted friend to the monarchical principle, and place implicit faith in the practical wisdom of "Kings, Lords, and Commons."

I am convinced that constitutional governments will ere long be established in every part of the Peninsula, if Socialism be effectually destroyed; for sovereigns are already convinced that in no other manner can the succession of their children be secured.

CHAPTER XIX.

TURIN.

HAVING heard that the Veronese nobleman and his beautiful and amiable Countess, who had received me so hospitably and magnificently at Cola, on the very day on which the first Austrian attack on Rivoli was made, were at Milan, I went to the hotel where they had alighted for the purpose of paying my respects; but what was my astonishment on hearing that the lady had been confined only two days before the arrival of the Tedeschi, and that on the very morning of their entrance, and the third after her *accouchement*, she had disregarded the advice of her physician and started for Genoa.

This was about the maddest act that could be performed, but so strong was the lady's mind, and so excellent her constitution, that when I saw her some weeks afterwards at the Hôtel de Londres in that city, she was in rude health, and she and her fine boy not only "doing as well as could be

expected," but a great deal better than anyone could have imagined.

The Countess is one of the most refined and sensitive persons I ever met with, brought up with every worldly comfort, but such is the natural system acted upon in Italy, that on such an occasion as this she displayed the vigour of a country wife, or *femme du peuple*, and could with difficulty understand me when I explained all the details and precautions taken in our nurseries.

This lady hated the Tedeschi so thoroughly, that nothing would induce her to remain where they were, as she supposed, intoxicated with success, though she did not wrong them so far as to imagine they would ill treat her or the baby. Her husband was in an agony when she announced her determination to leave Milan; but when he saw that her nervous system was weaker than her physical power, like a sensible man he gave way, and had a carriage procured in which a large mattress could be laid, and in which the mother, child, and nurse, could be all accommodated.

He followed with a physician in another carriage, and a numerous suite of servants; but he declared that the Countess required no medical aid during the whole journey, and that her mind and person were equally unfatigued.

If Madame ——— was one of those powerful strong-framed Amazons, that is seen in high as well as in humble life, occasionally, I should not

mention this curious case; but she was of moderately delicate proportions, and perfectly feminine in mind and person.

She told me that the morning after I had visited them at Cola, the Austrians had in force attacked the position of Rivoli, and were repulsed; but when she saw that General Sonaz had retreated, knowing that a superior force would be brought against him, she thought it high time to decamp, and so she, her husband, children, governess, and a long retinue, set out for Dezenzano, believing that in a few days they might be able to return.

The position of their grounds being highly strategic, Sonaz proposed to make a stand there, in which case the magnificent villa and gardens would have been ruined; but fortunately he changed his mind, seeing how easily he might be turned, and thus their splendid property was spared.

After the affair of Custoza the Count and Countess abandoned Dezenzano, and went to Brescia, from whence they proceeded to Milan, where, as we have seen, they were disturbed most inopportunely by the too early arrival of the enemy.

I left Milan by the *malle-poste* for Chiasco, the first village in the canton of Tessin, the validity of my passport having been recognised at the gates, and in three or four hours we were ascending the great hill above Como, and taking a parting look of that magnificent lake, and the ever-varying scenery that surrounds it.

It was, I was told, fortunate that I had not appeared three or four days sooner, as the notorious Garibaldi had occupied the mountain at the head of some four hundred mounted followers, and levied contributions from friends and foes, on his and the band's private account. It appeared that Garibaldi would neither admit the rights of Radetzky or of Charles Albert to sign an armistice, but contended that on him, and such free corps as his, devolved the authority of making peace or continuing the war.

Being unable, however, to cope with any body of Austrians in the field, he was at a loss how to employ his time; so to keep his hand in, he went about from place to place, calling for money and rations from every village, and promising to leave that neighbourhood as soon as his wants were supplied.

The municipality of Como had been politely invited to his head-quarters, and there told that so much ready cash, and so much beef and rice were necessary for public purposes, and inquired of whether it would be more convenient for the said corporation to forward them to him, or for him to send one or two hundred of his lancers to receive them in kind. The *Podestà* declared he could not think of giving so much trouble to so great a patriot, and straightway came the "tin" and the *bovi*, the Lord Mayor himself remaining as a hostage in the hands of the "General."

Garibaldi had, on the day I arrived at Como,

crossed to the Piedmontese side of the Lago Maggiore, and I had the prospect of seeing this self-elected sovereign in the vicinity of Arona. The truly Italian patriots contend that Charles Albert was in the wrong, and that Garibaldi was in the right, and so no doubt he was on the mountain overlooking the lake; but unfortunately society has invented the words highwaymen, and banditti; and I have heard of gentlemen being hanged in England, or their heads cut off in France, for not giving such acts the proper name, and for not making it manifest that the honour and the liberties of the country were at stake.

Two other captains of free corps pursued for a short time the same enlightened system; but the Austrian cavalry did not understand Italian, and so they were cut down whilst explaining that a great national cause was supported by them. Garibaldi had better luck, for I afterwards had the satisfaction of being shot at—out of distance of course—by some of his comrades at Rome; but there the French behaved with as much rudeness as the Austrians did in Lombardy, or the Piedmontese at Arona, and his valour and patriotism are reserved for another occasion.

The final Austrian visà having been given to my passport at the solitary custom-house that marks the Lombard frontier, we found in a few minutes a clamorous welcome and unceasing demands for news of Milan, from the numerous emigrants who had left their homes the day before

the arrival of Radetzky, and were now collected at Chiasco.

They seemed astonished when we told them that the Austrians had entered the city with all the pomp of war, as a victorious army naturally would, but that since their arrival not an act of violence had been committed; and that the Commander-in-chief had, to the most minute particular, performed all his promises.

I could see that the men were visibly affected by this intelligence, and that many were inclined to return, and again take possession of their property; but the women were more violent than ever, and, "convinced against their will," declared that husbands and fathers might go home, but that they never would again look upon the Duomo. Husbands and fathers count for little in cases where a wife's and mother's feelings are resolutely engaged, and one by one the victims to female despotism, or persuasion, yielded, and I am satisfied that out of the whole number of "waverers," not one had the courage to look back.

These ladies I began to believe were the true heroines who promised to burn their *bambini*, finery, and themselves, in the Duomo in case the Austrians returned, and who had compounded for the breach of that oath by a sentence of voluntary exile.

Fortunately I was not personally known to any of these termagant patriots, for undoubtedly if discovered with pen and ink in the "Times" portfolio,

I should have been stoned, or scolded to death, which is pretty much the same thing.

What abuse did I not hear that evening of the French and English cabinets, and even of Lord Palmerston, who some months before had been worshipped by these same furies. How often did they exclaim that they had been sold by England and betrayed by France, and how emphatically was the divine vengeance called down on the heads of John Bull and *son tres cher voisin*.

The last advice my poor dear mother gave me, was "never to dispute with a woman, for defeat is degradation, and victory is dishonour." So making a quiet retreat to the small inn, I called for a *cutlet à la Milanaise*, and though it had not all the delicacy of Angela's cooking, it was not to be rejected by a hungry man.

The canton of Tessin, though governmentally Swiss, is Italian in character, feeling, and in language, or rather it is neither one or the other, "neither flesh, nor fish, nor good red herring," but a villainous compound of Swiss independence and Lombard pride, which is eternally creating difficulties at home, and giving umbrage to its Austrian neighbour.

Before a central government existed at Berne, this canton was allowed to indulge its vagaries, fettered only by the fear of Austrian vengeance; but since it forms part of a federal union, and is obliged to conform to the orders of the President

and council of ministers, a constant state of irritation is maintained, and not a month passes without menaces being made of marching troops to reduce it to more decorous conduct.

When I was last year in the neighbourhood, open encouragement was given to desertion from the Austrian army, and Radetzky naturally made strong remonstrances at Berne, through the resident minister, the Chevalier Thom, and declared that unless the line of demarcation was respected, he would cross the frontier and occupy all the lower part of the canton.

The Central Government acted with good faith, and sent commissioners with most stringent orders to Lugano, in consequence of which the grievance complained of was put an end to, but the relations between the canton and the cabinet are, and will continue to be, at all times unsatisfactory.

At midnight I arrived at Lugano, and chartered a little carriage that engaged to deliver me at break of day at the head of the Lago Maggiore, in time for the departure of the Arona steamer. I have travelled a great deal on foot, on horseback, and *en voiture*, but I never remember experiencing such strange sensations as I felt during these few hours' journey. I was neither asleep nor awake, but I had a perfect consciousness of motion, without the power of distinguishing any particular object, and a general idea of the mountain and valley seen by a bright moonlight, without the faculty of observing the limits of either.

There were wide-spread woods and overhanging trees, occasional glimpses of water, and sparks of the fire-fly darting from the hedge; but there was a drowsiness overhanging all, as if I saw them with the mind, and not with outward vision.

I heard the carriage wheels, and had an idea of a gradual descent, as in fact the road did lead from the high grounds of Lugano to the level of the lake; but I had no perception of any particular locality, and time and distance were alike unheeded.

Such, I imagine, would be the dream of an opium eater; and such are the trances in which the mind, enfeebled by a long illness of the body, indulges; but I cannot conceive the many hours' continuance of such a visionary state in a subject like myself, full of health and vigour, and on principle opposed to all fanciful enjoyments, when physical wants are more imperious.

What I desired now was a good sound sleep, or a full state of wakefulness; the one refreshing nature, the other allowing me to arrange my next letter, and future plans; but both were apparently impossible of attainment; and it was only when the glare of day struck boldly on the eyelids, that I roused myself from a long-protracted doze, under which the mind and body were equally paralysed.

Had I drunk wine at Chiasco, or Lugano, I might imagine that it had been drugged by a Milanese *enragé;* but I am temperate to a fault, and unless the cutlet was cooked with poppy juice, or that I

was magnetised by the coachman, I shall never be able to understand the extraordinary state of non-existence into which I was thrown for so long a period.

The Lugano driver faithfully performed his engagement; and after getting a bath at the quay-side inn, I stepped on board one of the tidy steamers that daily navigated this interesting lake.

The boat was crowded with Italian emigrants, and of course with numerous English travellers; and as the weather was lovely, we had a charming promenade, touching at various little ports, and landing or taking in passengers.

As I cannot go anywhere without meeting faces and persons, with which I am well acquainted, or to whom I am well known, I had the pleasure of finding on board a gentleman who was a constant guest at Mr. Bairr's, at Milan; and who, though not an Italian himself, seemed to hang on Lombard independence, as a means of personal advancement, while at the same time he was on good terms with the Austrian conqueror.

I never could clearly make out what this personage was; not by family or rank, for they were well known; but his position with respect to the two opposing parties. He had been evidently in the confidence of the late Provisional Government, and was on terms of intimacy with officers high in station near Radetzky; but though we were very friendly together, and he often came to my rooms to

consult me at Milan, I never could bring him to book, or reduce him to a plain and consistent story.

With such gentry there is but one way of dealing; that is, to keep your mind to yourself, as John Bull says, to let them talk as much as they please, and never fail in all the forms that strict etiquette requires.

The Count and I were therefore glad to meet; and so we began a game of tact and finesse, which did not end for many days, and in which I unravelled all the plans of the Lombard lords, and their thread-paper theory for regenerating Italy. What the *quasi* diplomatist got out of me I am at a loss to imagine; but he seemed equally well pleased, and I understand that he boasted at Turin that he had got me in his pocket.

This, I beg you to observe, is a favourite phrase with your nursery diplomatists. They are eternally having their supposed dupes in that strange locality; whereas the ancients of the tribe never aim at any such power, being more intent on getting themselves,—that is to say, their gold,—into *your* pocket, by which you become bound to their view of the case, as Faust was to Mephistopheles.

For my own part, destiny having mixed up my humble pen with matters more important than you, Sir, or Madam, can imagine, I was delighted to hear that the fry of foreign officers supposed me to be so snugly lodged, whilst I took care to defend myself against the veterans by never accepting a private

favour at their hands, and refusing all the honours, dinners, and more precious gifts which they placed at my disposal.

I have much to say on this subject in its proper place, should another series of my campaigns be demanded by the public; but let me now commence an acquaintance with the charming daughter of a fair friend of mine in Ireland, who was, when I was "a slip of a boy," one of the loveliest of young ladies in a city famed all the world over for its beautiful women, and, ere French kid was fashionable, for its gloves; but as the former were too rich for use, so the latter were "for earth too dear;" costing half-a-guinea per pair, and being so superfine that two might find place within the shell of a walnut.

The young lady to whom I was presented as a countryman,—proud, indeed, I was to claim nationality with such an interesting being,—was the perfect reflection of a face and form I had seen so many years before. The same fair hair, the same white brow, the same bright blue eye and dark-fringed eyelash, the same delicate and gentle form, and, above all, the same heavenly expression of innocence, softness, and sensibility, which are so characteristic of the *pur sang Irlandais*.

I went back to the age of sixteen, when I first beheld "this neighbour's bairn," as she came from the convent of New Hall, where she had been educated in mental excellence as well as outward accomplishments, and I again saw in the person of

her daughter, the exact age, the budding beauty, and the celestial expression, which Heaven bestows on those fair beings who fulfil its will on earth, and who give to man all that he knows of happiness at this side the grave.

The young lady's father, and the husband of my earliest flame, was on board, and to him, of course, I was presented; and as we were all bound for Turin, we agreed to form one party.

The father was a money-making Italian; quite unworthy, so far as appearance and manner went, of the brilliant star which I had worshipped in early life. But no doubt he had domestic qualities which secured his partner's affection, and caused his fair child to love him as she appeared to do.

I became instantly a confidential friend of the family, and delighted the young lady with the account I gave of her mother's loveliness and grace; whilst she assured me, that though years had made a change in her, the traces of beauty were still distinct, and the soul of goodness seemed to have bestowed the lasting freshness of youth.

My young friend, though born in Italy, was Irish in mind and feeling, and even her accent in speaking English was tinged with a slight Milesian hue. She had the "ah don't," "oh dear," "the darling," "the honey," in moderate perfection; and her transition from pure Tuscan to rich Irish, was most amusing. She had not seen the green fields of Doonass, nor the broad Shannon, nor the Lakes of Killarney, nor

the Galtee mountains,—but she had heard of each, and was insatiable in her curiosity to learn all about them, and to have objects in Italy mentioned to which they could be compared.

My brogue, and the Irishisms with which my conversation, like this writing, is interlarded, were to her a fertile source of enjoyment, and most heartily did she laugh at Mr. Pat; and as her father knew just enough English to enable him to understand the point of her pleasant raillery, we formed a very merry party.

My young friend promised to let her mother know of the strange *rencontre* she had made, and the father gave me a most friendly invitation to his house at Florence, or Leghorn, or Genoa, or Venice, where I shall not say; and when in the course of a few weeks I did present myself at that hospitable mansion, I found a welcome which the Irish only can give, and which the Irish only can appreciate.

In every other country in the world, people invite you for form's sake, from some implied obligation, or to fill up a given number; but in Ireland, at least so it used to be in my youth, you are asked because your host's heart is full of enjoyment, and he wishes that you should participate in its fruits. You are welcome, a thousand times welcome, simply as a guest; but if you have good qualities to recommend you—a ready wit, a fluent tongue, a love for music, and the power of giving it vocal or instrumental expression; if you can ride, hunt, do not fear a fall, can bring

down your bird, and show pluck on any difficult occasion, you oblige instead of being obliged, by prolonging your visit, and unless you become weary, no one is tired of you.

I speak of the dear old country as it was some five-and-twenty years ago, ere poor-laws were invented, or cotton-lords sacrificed the land; of those good old times when to be merry was no crime, when every dinner-table was brilliant with wit, and every drawing-room presented as much beauty, with the handmaids of modesty and refinement, as the most fastidious could desire.

I know nothing of Ireland as she now is, and from all I hear, I have no desire to see the reverse of the medal.

We reached Arona fortunately after General Garibaldi had transacted business at the municipality, and having hired a carriage, set out for Novara, where conveyances for Turin were best procured. Arona was happily removed from the bustle of the war, and out of the way of either the advancing or retreating army; but Novara was in the high road from Milan, and as I had seen there some five months before, all the pomp and preparation for a certain conquest, I now witnessed the mortification and disorganisation resulting from defeat.

The streets were encumbered with the materials of war, the houses crowded with troops, and it was with difficulty we could find accommodation at the

best of the two bad hotels. Even my appeals to the innkeeper and his waiters, who had fleeced me before, as an Englishman is ever fleeced, were indifferently received; as the Piedmontese officers would not take excuses at home with which they put up in Lombardy, and insisted on being served.

Happily I met one of my campaigning acquaintance, and through his aid I procured the necessary comforts for our young friend; and the father and I were too glad to accept anything we could get.

The great hotels at Turin are excellent, and by no means expensive, considering that you are perfectly well lodged, and that the table is abundantly and richly served; but the country inns are regular *gargottes*—dirty and disgusting, and the cooking is truly detestable. The *albergos* at Novara, Mortara, Vercelli, and Novi, I hold in special abhorrence; and I recommend the traveller to avoid if he can sojourning in either town.

Whether the rest of the population are equally roguish I cannot say, as I had no dealings with them in either town; but I can answer for the inns as the worst and most extravagant in Italy. Provincial, nay, even national cooking, save the French, is generally bad; but in Piedmont, in the places I speak of, it is superlatively execrable. You call in vain for anything but what the waiter chooses to place before you; and the rascal is almost ready to quarrel with you, when, as the last *plat*, and the dinner as you think is over, he brings you the soup, or *menestra*—

bouillon thickened with rice, or vegetables—and you complain that he did not commence the service with it.

In Germany they serve sweet pudding after hot soup, and in France the fish is kept back towards the end of the dinner; but never did I see in any country, save in the provincial inns of Piedmont, the *menestra* served as the last dish. None of my neighbours objected to the practice, and I presume that my bad taste, and not the custom, is at fault.

CHAPTER XX.

TURIN (*continued*).

I WAS received at Turin with open arms, particularly by the gallant and noble gentlemen who had so well sustained the honour of the country on the Mincio banks, as several letters which I had written to the "Times," explaining that the disasters of the campaigns were not to be attributed to the army, or any portion of it, but to the ignorance and inefficient direction of the Commander-in-chief, had been translated in the local papers.

These accounts made me extremely popular, and all the best houses made a point of inviting me, and my colleagues of the press wrote several articles in my favour. But this pleasing delusion did not last many days, as numerous violent articles appeared in the leading journal of the city, condemning the freedom with which I had presumed to speak of the military and diplomatic talents of Charles Albert, and I fell from the high position I at first enjoyed, to that of a rather humble pretender.

Of course criticism is one of those games at which two can play; and if I spoke freely of the King, others had a right to comment freely on me; but what I objected to was, that the Turin papers profited daily by my correspondence, as not one of them had the spirit to incur the expense of sending an editor to the field of action; and if they gave me credit for being correct in nearly all the details, they had no right, without better evidence before them, to pulverise me on any one special case.

What I said was the echo of the voice of the whole army, and facts more than corroborated it; but the editors aimed at obtaining office and high station, as some of them since have done, and they considered that to defend the sovereign in his errors was the nearest road to power.

It was certainly most remarkable, that not one of the Italian papers had a regular correspondent in the camp, and all the accounts they published, until my letters appeared in the "Galignani," to be copied by them, were voluntary and imperfect contributions from officers of the different corps.

We know full well that such sources are the worst from which a newspaper can be supplied, as the writer is only acquainted with the events occurring in the narrow circle by which his view is bounded; and it is only a person free to range over the whole district who can really understand what is going on.

I was solicited by several friends to answer these

articles, and show the weakness of the reasoning, as well as expose the motives of the editors; but of all detestable things, in my opinion, a newspaper war is the most hateful, and I allowed the censure to pass unanswered, well knowing that I had the whole army at my side.

If the newspaper press represents, as it is said to do, the feeling of a whole people, what can we say of the state of national sensibility in the Peninsula on the subject of the war, when we find that not a single journal had a correspondent on the spot; and that if the London "Times" had not incurred a serious outlay, the history of each day would have been lost.

Must we not admit that a perfect indifference prevailed on the subject, and that it was not with the campaign, or its consequences, people were employed, but with displays which fed their excessive vanity, and rendered their own town, or village, prominent in the ephemeral existence of a four months' delusion.

The official journal of Milan was the spring which fed all the streams of public instruction; and when we know that its columns contained nothing but bulletins of the most exaggerated nature, and praises of the *Prodi*, we can imagine how fully the rest of Italy was informed.

One unfortunate contributor appeared for a few days at Valleggio, and I remember that my kind hostess indulged him with an arm-chair and a pillow

at night, in a corridor, as she had not a bed to offer; but he was got rid of at the instance of an officer from the same city, who said, naïvely enough, "If the Bolognese want to hear news from the camp, let them go to our house and hear my letters read, as I write regularly once a week,—and for what purpose are we to be troubled with this man, and where is he to get information?"

The fact was, that the honest details, if honest details he dare give, to be sent by the correspondent, might very much affect the verity and good faith of the noble volunteer, and show the failing cause of Charles Albert in a different light from that in which our friend presented it.

I mention this fact to prove that the Italian press was *insouciant* on the subject of intelligence from the camp, and that Italians themselves were more desirous of suppressing than aiding the exertions of the few who attempted to remedy the defect.

Though the court party espoused the cause of the journal that attacked me, I had no occasion to complain of my reception in general society, and I believe few strangers have been more cordially received than I was at Turin. The "Casino di Nobili," or, to give it its every-day title, "the whist club," invited me to dinner, and if my memory serves me right, the invitation came through the hands of the nobleman who then directed the journal to which I allude as having led the attack against me.

I found at Turin, that the officers of the army,

and indeed every person of consideration, were agreed in considering that, as the honour of the troops was saved, the true interests of Piedmont were not injured by the nominally disastrous termination of the campaign.

The Lombards, particularly the Milanese, were so cordially detested, that not the slightest compassion was expressed for them, and, the war never having been popular with the higher classes and landed proprietors, it was satisfactory to them to know that it was at an end on any terms.

I therefore found the city by no means in a desponding state, and though the same National Guard meetings did not take place, and the Cafés were not crowded, as before, with belligerent shopboys, the outward symptoms of satisfaction were visible, and the theatres and all places of public amusement were, as usual, crowded.

The treasury was the only sufferer, as the many millions that had been amassed by the prudent administration of Count Gallina, had been dissipated in the campaign. But the system of taxation is excellent in Piedmont, and principles of order are so well established, that even this was no serious obstacle to the common enjoyment.

Charles Albert had not yet appeared at Turin, probably because he did not wish to exhibit the ravages which so much care and so many misfortunes had made in his face and person; but the motive assigned for his absence was, that the fortress of

Alexandria was in an inefficient state, and that extensive repairs were necessary.

This was a truth recognised by all, and the King was much better employed there than he could have been in the capital, and when I visited the fortress, in a few weeks after the period I speak of, I was astonished to see how much had been done in so short a space of time. All the timber obstructing the fire of the walls, or covering an enemy's approach, was cut down, and the guns had a wide and perfect range of the circle in which the bastions stood.

The ditches had been cleaned, and inundated; the walls strengthened in every spot where a defect existed; and numerous out-works were constructed, supporting the fire of the place itself.

The fortress, built between the rivers Tanaro and Bormida, at the extremity of the celebrated plain of Marengo, is considered to be very strong, and no doubt it would seem in some degree to cause the position to be respected; but, as modern warfare is conducted, it could be easily "observed" by a force equal to that of the garrison, and in this sense, isolate so many combatants on either side.

For my own part I cannot understand the value attached to Alexandria, as either an offensive or defensive position; as it can be easily turned, and as in fact it commands nothing that would avert the course of a victorious army. Once beyond the range of its guns, the position is practically useless, and though it may serve as cover to beaten troops, or a

depot for those victorious, I have no idea of a conquering invader setting down before it in form, or losing the number of weeks, days, and men, necessary to reduce it.

No doubt these remarks are made in profound ignorance of the art of war, and unregardful of the numerous sieges it sustained in olden times; but I view everything in a practical point of view, and I care not much for those vast places of so-called strength, unless they command a pass or river, or are connected as Verona and Mantua relatively are.

Radetzky had no idea in either the campaigns of 1848 or 1849 of besieging Alexandria; and the Austrians, once at the Piedmontese side of the Tessin, can march upon Turin, without any let or hindrance from the place. The city might hold out as long as its provisions last, but a strict investment must reduce it in the end, and its destinies must follow the fate of the rest of the kingdom.

I compare these once celebrated fortresses, to a giant chained by the foot to a rock, with a certain quantity of provisions before him: come within his grasp, you are crushed to death—but take a wide offing and he is perfectly powerless against you, however weak you may be, and when his last morsel is consumed, he must surrender at discretion.

The ultra-liberal party, I regretted to see, still maintained its ascendancy in the capital, and those various manœuvres which led to the ruin of the

devoted monarch in the succeeding year, even then were in full activity. The Chambers were not sitting, and we were spared the infliction of hearing those mock patriot members veil their republican thoughts in fair sounding words, and their detestation of royalty in professions of devotion to the King's name.

But the evil genius of Sardinia was busily at work in the provinces, and treason was in full operation. We had less of this display at Turin than in the country towns, as the garrison was loyal to the back-bone, and the gentry who officered it, were determined to support the throne; but we had every night exhibitions of popular effervescence, and the minor theatres played pieces adapted for the occasion.

A cheap press inundated the city with revolutionary tracts, and papers, and the demand was so great for such stuff, where vast things were promised at the low price of a farthing or a halfpenny, that each day something new saw the light, edited by one patriot or the other, until nothing else was heard beneath the arcades, but the rival voices of contending newspaper-venders, promising liberty and independence.

The cafés were not quite so outrageous as they had been, but the "National" was still the resort of all the roaring patriots: and to hear the orators speak, one would suppose that they and not the Austrians had been triumphant.

In fact the "Café di Fiori," better known as the "Café Radetzky," was the only place where respectable men assembled; there at all hours all the officers of the guards, or the lancers, not on duty, were to be found; and I could soon perceive from their conversation, that though they would not admit the superiority of the Austrians in any degree, they were in reality glad that the campaign was over.

The great apprehension which they all entertained, and which in the following year was realised, arose from their knowledge of the King's character, and their conviction that he would be overpowered by the violence of the popular leaders into denouncing the armistice, and again declaring war against the Emperor.

In such cases their position would become most uncomfortable, as, whilst on the one hand they were determined to shed the last drop of blood in honour of the King and of the cross of Savoy, on the other they felt that victory would be a greater calamity than defeat, as the monarchy and all the established institutions of the country would be swept away by a triumphant republican faction.

I strongly recommended that the nobility and gentry of the country, should respectfully address the sovereign, and warn him in the most deferential terms of the coming danger; but so great was the devotion which existed to the royal will in Piedmont, that not a man would venture on taking such a

liberty, and they preferred being sacrificed, to expressing the slightest doubt of Charles Albert's wisdom and foresight.

The Duke of Savoy, the present excellent monarch, and the Duke of Genoa, were at the head of this, party I will not call it, but of the common sense and high intelligence of the nation; but the princes had been brought up in such habitual reverence of their father, that neither dare make a remonstrance of any kind.

They did all that in them lay to prepare for the coming evil, and under their active superintendence, the army was re-organised, and the efficiency of the several corps, thinned by loss of life before the enemy, or by desertion, was restored.

We had almost every day, in the Champs de Mars, exercises and reviews, and I saw with pleasure my old friends of the Mincio regain their self-confidence. The troops had received new clothing, and as all their material comforts were well attended to, their physical appearance kept pace with their moral improvement.

One circumstance contributed however to diminish this agreeable state of things, and that was the admission of numerous Lombards and other foreigners into their ranks, as lieutenants, and *sous* lieutenants. These introductions were disagreeable alike to officers and men, and much ill-blood was created by them, but the Government answered, "What can we do? we must not exclude from our

ranks men to whom commissions were given during the campaign, or abandon to absolute destitution those who took service, however late in the day, and have followed our retreat."

The minister of war was right, but the Piedmontese gentlemen would not admit the principle, and I saw several officers leave a box at the theatre into which one of the new-made lieutenants came, or, as they said, intruded.

The army in the kingdom of Sardinia has been at all times a provision for younger children of the nobility; and in a country where persons of *pur sang* do not engage in the professions of law and medicine, or in commerce, the system was attended with good results. The officers were well educated, brave as gentlemen who hold a place in society must be, and devoted to the crown, because loyalty is hereditary in the Piedmontese.

So far as my experience goes, I have always seen the officers of *pur sang* lead the way for the men whom they commanded, and so great was the influence of rank in this gallant society, that the veriest coward must have done his duty, from the mere force of example.

The French army is no doubt an exception, and officers but the other day promoted from the ranks, are always prominent in the field. But every Frenchman is brave to temerity, and there is an *esprit militaire* in all which cannot be resisted.

I cannot, however, help thinking that the character

of our gallant neighbours' military position would be advanced, not diminished, if the system were changed, and the army officered solely by men brought up in professional schools, and who had received the education and had the feelings of gentlemen.

It must be recollected that a great army is not always in the field of battle, and that society has its claims; and when we find that out of a large garrison only a few men holding commissions will accept invitations, or frequent what is called "the world," it is difficult to approve of a system which produces such a result.

During the Empire, large rewards were necessary to reconcile the people to the never-ceasing conscription; and it was a proud hope which filled the young man's heart as he left his native village, that he might one day return to it in a general's uniform. The whole country was sacrificed to the military principle; but the necessity has ceased, and my sermon is at an end.

CHAPTER XXI.

TURIN (*continued*).

AMONG the many strange uses to which "Our Own Correspondent" may be, turned, I found at Turin that a new style of business had been invented by me, and that my lucubrations were not only profitable in filling up the wide spaces of the broad sheet, but in supplying the great void in many a gentleman's existence, and giving a good and rich wife to no doubt a very deserving husband.

I know nothing of the case myself, as the happy man was too proud to acknowledge such a service, and took care to shun me in public and private; and to the lady I had not the honour of being presented; but the details were given me by a friend of both parties, who had them from an aged female relation of the *belle Anglaise*, by whom the negotiation was conducted, and I believe them to be in all respects true.

For some years there lived in a certain city in the north of Italy, three sisters, English by birth,

but not over English in feeling, to whom a rich father and mother had left the sum of ninety thousand pounds, in three equal portions. Such a sum in Piedmont, or Lombardy, is fabulous as the dowry of a young lady, and the unmarried nobility were at first incredulous on the subject; but on the truth being substantially known and admitted, numerous were the offers the dear creatures received, and equally numerous were the victims they rejected.

Among the most prominent, and most pertinacious, was an officer of rank, with whom I was subsequently on friendly terms in the campaign, who had offered no less than three times, and three times had been refused; and on the last occasion in so decided a manner, that all hope of another tender of his hand and heart being accepted was abandoned.

It chanced that I saw a great deal of this gallant soldier at the camp, and that I wrote in highly flattering terms of his talents, his private and public character, and of the esteem in which he was deservedly held by Charles Albert, and the Dukes of Savoy and Genoa.

It so fell out, or rather fell in, that the lady patronised my pen, and that she had conceived a high opinion of the "Times" correspondent's ability, penetration, and clear-sightedness!—ahem!

The frequent mention of the hero's name, and the characteristic details with which I more than once introduced it, made the fair *demoiselle* think, and

doubt, till on one occasion when something remarkable had occurred, she exclaimed to the old relative I have alluded to, "Dearest friend, I fear I have mistaken the Count's worth, and I protest if ever he asks me again, he shall not be refused."

At the end of the campaign the officer came to Turin, and met in society the object of his former flame; still nothing was said on her part to induce him to think that a change of sentiment had taken place; but one bright day he renewed acquaintance with the aunt, and the secret was by her cautiously disclosed.

Of course such hints are not thrown away on a man, who has for fortune, his epaulettes, his sword, and his rank, particularly when there is a per contra creditor of thirty thousand pounds; so the first occasion was made use of to commence a siege in form, and in the course of a month it was brought to a close, by the surrender of the fortress and its worldly wealth.

I did not hear all these details till long after I left Turin; but I cannot help complaining of the unhandsome conduct of the Count, who even, as I say, avoided my presence; and I protest, should he become a widower, and that I have another wife on hand, with a heart, as Gamaliel Pickle said, "warranted sound," and one-third of a plum to dispose of, he shall not be the man.

I have a great mind to publish his name, but that might vex his wife, and as she is a most amiable

person by all accounts, we will spare him for her sake.

I met on the Corso to-day, during Carnival at Rome, another sister, with an equal fortune, probably determined not to marry until she finds some one worthy of her hand in the letters of the "Times" correspondent; but I beg leave to inform her that I have given up the trade, and she and all other rich spinsters must look out for themselves.

I had the honour of flinging a bouquet into her carriage, and of receiving in return a handful of "*confetti*," or lime dust, which nearly blinded me; and if such be the rewards I receive for my services, and my politeness, away with the whole family—we will speak of them no more.

I will only add that there are several English ladies married to Piedmontese noblemen at Turin; and as far as I could learn, that they have found most excellent husbands, and I have seldom seen happier homes than in those houses where I was so cordially received after the campaign.

I spent a fortnight at Turin, for the purpose of making myself acquainted with the probable course of events, till seeing that nothing was likely to take place for the present, I determined to visit the other parts of the Peninsula, and to inform my dear British public of all that was going on at Florence, Rome, and Naples.

I only waited to learn from the nobleman, who against his will and personal interest, was placed at

the head of the Sicilian deputation offering the crown of that insurgent isle to the Duke of Genoa, what he and his colleagues were doing, and I was determined when that negotiation came to an end, to go to Sicily if the offer were accepted, and if not, to Florence and Rome.

The nobleman alluded to, accompanied by elegant extracts of the deputation, went down to Alexandria to see the King, finding, after many days delay, that his Majesty was determined not to come to Turin; and on his return and that of his friends, I took care to be in the way, and had what I may call the first news of the result.

It appeared from all I heard, that Charles Albert had been excessively courteous, a bad sign for those who had a favour to demand, but that he could not be brought to the giving a plain answer, such as "yes," or "no."

The deputation came back satisfied that the King had accepted the island crown for his second-born; but I who knew what fine phrases meant, told the members in as many words, that their mission had failed, and that on no account would the King create for himself all the new embarrassments which an answer in the affirmative must occasion.

The simple-minded President contended that I was wrong, but I made an impression on his colleagues, and so I said adieu, resolved to leave Naples and Sicily as the *bonne bouche*, and stay my appetite for news at Florence and Rome.

The first person I met on the staircase, bound on the same errand, was the British minister, who I must say looked a little annoyed that I had anticipated his visit. Had his Excellency seen the Duke before me, I have no doubt he would have cautioned him against being confidential to "Our Own;" but as I lived in the same hotel as the deputation, I had the whip-hand of our diplomacy, and the start by as many minutes as it took the minister to come from his house, on being informed that the Duke had returned and desired to see him.

Some person said the mission and everything connected with it had been arranged by the British representative, and that he had the deputation "in his pocket;" but this, no doubt, is a calumny, as we all know that our Foreign Office never meddled in the affairs of Italy, and that we did not bring the said deputation in a British man-of-war steamer from Palermo to Genoa!

The Earl of Minto who had visited Turin, and all the other capitals of the Peninsula, never opened his mouth on the subject of domestic grievances; and if he received such men as Ciciruacchio in his drawing-room, we all know it is the glorious privilege of our aristocracy, to invite horse-keepers and sellers of hay and barley, to their tables, just to show what the true equality of the British Constitution is.

The Sicilian nobleman seemed to be more afraid of our minister than of his own Provisional Government, when I convinced him that his mission had

completely failed; but on that point I also had the honour to console him, as no one knew better the futility of the enterprise, than did the personage alluded to.

The bitter part of the jest was, and is, that the Sicilian nobleman, being one of the largest landed proprietors in the island, was compelled by actual force to head the deputation, and that the Provisional Government having failed, he was expatriated by the King.

In vain he represents that his opinions were well known, that his loyalty had never been questioned, and that his only crime was trying to detach one half of the kingdom from the crown; for he is always met with one or two queries which he finds very difficult to answer, such as—"Were you president of the deputation?" "Did you offer the throne of Sicily to the son of the King of Sardinia?"

The poor Duke is sadly perplexed to get over these difficulties; but as his property has not been confiscated, he enjoys still an excellent revenue, and passes his time between London, Paris, and Florence; as to Turin he cannot abide it, for in that place it was that his sorrows commenced.

The campaign at Turin being at an end, I passed on to Genoa, and I found there that a more remarkable change to notions of common sense had taken place, even than in the capital. Commerce, that enemy to all idle and useless displays, had resumed its sway; and the Bourse instead of being occupied

as parade-ground for the National Guard, was restored to its legitimate purpose.

Some manifestations were made occasionally, and even excesses were now and then indulged in, but on the whole, a striking improvement had taken place, and none but the republican faction were at work. I found a decided alteration in the opinions and language of bankers and merchants, and all men of sense agreed that though the expulsion of the Austrians from Lombardy would have been most desirable, yet, as the movement had failed, the sooner it was forgotten the better.

Genoa was full of wealth and of resources, and though the open trade to Lombardy during the four months' campaign had been immense, and profitable beyond expectation, yet as it was now necessarily terminated, new sources of speculation and gain must be looked for.

Notwithstanding these wise resolves on the part of the substantial citizens, another, the democratic portion, excited by the crowd of Lombard and other republican agents, got up rows of more or less importance. On one occasion it was determined to burn the registers of the police, and a crowd of some thousand people assembled near the place in which those papers were deposited, and without the slightest opposition being offered by the civil or military authorities, brought them out packet by packet, and setting fire to them in the midst of the square, destroyed even the last vestige of a document.

The immense blaze caused by this sacrifice alarmed most seriously the inhabitants of the distant parts of the city, who did not know what was going on near the municipality; and I remember when I was that night at the extremity of the *Strada Nuovissima*, we imagined that the town had been fired by the mob, as the cries of the furious radicals were heard not only from the place itself, but from the streets into which detachments of mad patriots wandered.

The general in command did not send out a single soldier to repress the crowd, nor did the Lord Mayor call on the force at his disposal, and if the people that night had wished to plunder the magnificent palaces of Genoa, I saw nothing that could have prevented them; but fortunately their leaders confined their vengeance to the records of the police, probably because their own names figured in them as *spies*, and after frightening all peaceable citizens, the riot ceased.

A more agreeable demonstration took place about the same period, at which I assisted, not as an actor, but spectator; I allude to a dinner of three hundred and fifty covers got up by the liberal leader in the theatre of Carlo Felice, in a style, if I must own, of first-rate elegance, and with a decorum and good taste that would put many of our public festivals to shame.

The pit was covered over on a level with the stage, and on this platform one cross and three long

tables were laid. None but persons inscribed in the President's books were allowed to partake of the dinner, but all the boxes were thrown open for the use of strangers to whom tickets were presented, and among that number I chanced to be.

I have seldom seen a handsomer display, as the *salle* of the theatre is magnificent, and it was illuminated as on a gala night. The dinner was excellent, and the hum of voices and the clatter of knives and forks, was only varied by the pistol-shot explosion of champagne corks escaped from the fetters that kept them down, and the agreeable gurgling of the iced wine itself, as it was poured into the numerous claimants' glasses.

At length the grand affair of life, what the Irish tutor calls "the *ating* and the *dhrinking*," being over, the political business of the feast began, and patriotic toasts were proposed, with more or less patriotic eloquence.

If I were to believe all I heard that night, I must have wondered at my more than brutal ignorance, in supposing that the Austrians had been victorious, and the *Prodi* Genoese obliged to seek safety in flight. It appeared that the campaign, far from being over, was just about to begin, and that the patriots who had demolished that day's dinner were only whetting their appetites before they devoured Radetzky and his Croats.

When the toasts and speeches were exhausted, then began the recitations in prose and verse, both

being of course intolerable. The people in the boxes went to sleep at the monotonous repetition of the same sounds; and even I, who ought to have remained awake, could not resist the influence of overpowering drowsiness, on hearing a Lombard patriot read some hundred couplets of his own composition, in which every verse terminated with the words, "*Siamo fratelli*" (We are brothers). The first "*Siamo*" made me nod; the second, yawn; the third, drop my head over the front of the box; and, at the fourth, I fell fast asleep.

Still I heard the words "*Siamo fratelli*" ringing in my ears, and when the box-keeper came to warn me out, all the world having gone, I awoke with a start, exclaiming, "*Fratelli, fratelli!*" which the honest man returned with much self-satisfaction, saying, as he locked the door, "*Si, Signore, si; siamo fratelli.*"

The republicans of Genoa held me, I discovered, in special abhorrence, and more than one declared that, as I was unworthy to live, the sooner my earthly career was terminated, the better; but though many bullied and threatened when I was absent, not one had the courage to say a word when I was at hand to defend my life.

I frequently observed that these idle loungers, who spent the whole day chattering together in the open space near the Post Office, pointed me out to each other; but otherwise I had no reason to complain; and I was not offended that beaten men were

angry with a person who had so unsparingly exposed their faults and blunders.

On one occasion, however, and that I may say was the only one, during a long life, that political animosity was manifested towards me by open violence, I was exposed to something like a combined attack; but even there a little self-possession extricated me from a difficulty, and no overt act took place.

A new café had been opened at Genoa, in a mansion formerly occupied by the Jesuits, the access to which was by a long flight of stone steps leading from the street. The café, and the saloons connected with it, formed the three sides of a square, where a garden and fountains were established.

To this place, I, on a fine evening, after the dinner at the *table de hôte*, paid a visit, and having taken a place at one of the little tables, I could not help observing that my arrival had created a sensation in the room, and that consultations were held among different groups, in which, if I could translate their gestures into plain English, it was said, "Now we have got him, what shall we do?" to which the answer appeared equally plain, "Follow him out, stab him in the back at the top of the flight of stone steps, and fling his body into the street."

All this I marked, though I appeared to take not the least notice of what was going on, till, after I had my *demi-tasse*, and read the journal, I rose to depart. At the same instant I perceived that a dozen fine stout fellows left their places, silently dogged me to

the door, and even in the garden kept me close at hand.

I walked however quietly on till I came to a spot where I had a wall, against which I could place my back, and then taking a stand, I coolly buttoned my coat to the top button, turned up my wrist-bands, pocketted my gloves, and in fact made all the classic preparations for a street row.

I had confidence in the lesson of my old master in the noble art of self-defence, Richmond the Black; and so with my left knee slightly bent, my right foot acting as a lever for the body against the wall, and with both hands ready for the "mill," I stood determined to knock the first and second of my assailants down, well knowing that a dose for two, would serve as a dose for all, and that the others would turn tail.

Not a word was said, and I measured the group as they came directly towards me, determined however not to take the initiative, till two coming nearly within distance, I made that movement with hands and shoulders, that indicate "one," "two," and if they had passed the line, full in the face both would have the benefit, the only use I have had ever to make, of old Bill's lesson. "Keep quiet, sir, and when you hit, hit hard! spring from the point of your foot, middle your man with the left, and catch him under the butt of the ear with the right; let your shoulders go with the blow, let the whole weight of the body follow, and only deliver at the point."

Shade of old Bill Richmond, how I worshipped you at that moment! "Keep quiet, sir," was the base of the whole system—and quiet I did keep, till the two foremost not liking the weight and attitude of their man, drew up, when they should have come on, and the whole bunch of poltroons seeing that hesitation, stopped likewise, and all passed me in the most inoffensive manner.

The idlers and waiters who came out to see the fight, returned to the saloon, and I, unbuttoning the coat, and drawing on the gloves, walked quietly down the stairs, over which I was to be flung, and went to see John Douia at the Marionettes.

I do not give this little episode with any idea of vaunting my own prowess or coolness, but for the purpose of showing how much afraid all foreigners are, of what my old professor called, "his bunch of fives." Had I been armed with a sword, I have no doubt but my assailants would have come gallantly on, but there is something so awful in an Englishman's naked hands, held in proper form, that no one at the other side of the *Manche* likes to encounter them.

The lessons of my old friend have made me the quietest and least quarrelsome man in the world. As he used to say, "A gentleman, sir, only uses his hands to defend himself, and not to attack; we call the pugilistic art, for that reason, the noble science of defence. Depend on it, sir, you can never give, without receiving, and the very worst spoon can

mark you a black eye. 'Keep quiet, sir,' that is the golden rule, it will save you from many a licking."

These were the last words of the black, as I only came into his hands a year before his death, long after he had retired from the active labours of the profession. He was a practical philosopher, and it was the recollection of his advice, that saved me from being sent with a stiletto in my loins down the flight of steps at Genoa.

Every man who writes and publishes, creates faint friends and determined enemies; but this was the only instance, often as I have been menaced by local journals, in which anything resembling a personal assault was made.

CHAPTER XXII.

LEGHORN.

HAVING exhausted Lombardy, Piedmont, and Liguria, and spoken in honest and true terms of all that I saw passing at Milan, Turin, and Genoa, I determined now to examine the state of affairs in Tuscany, and try to discover how it was that the happiest and best governed people in the Peninsula, had abandoned the condition of indolent repose so congenial to their natures, to embark on the troubled sea of revolution, and to ascertain why the Grand Duke had been induced to perform the suicidal act of making common cause with Charles Albert.

I had another motive for visiting Florence, which the ordinary reader will laugh at, but which a few will value and excuse. I write it in that feeling of perfect confidence which I hope ever exists between a candid author and his friends, though I admit it will expose me to ridicule, and risk the reputation I have gained in the cabinet and in the field.

From my earliest infancy I have been tormented

with two desires, hitherto unsatisfied,—the one to visit the island of Otaheite, or Tahiti, as it is now called; the other to make acquaintance with the Venus de' Medici. Fortune was unfavourable to both wishes—no decent pretext offered for my undertaking a voyage to the Pacific, and often as I attempted winning my way to Florence, something or other interfered to prevent me. Duty, that dreadful and all-powerful word, destroyed my hopes almost at the moment of their being realised, and I have passed, of course, with post haste, east, and west, and north, and south, of the immortal city, without ever having the power to turn even for a few hours from a prescribed road to enter it. It seemed as if fate was resolved to deprive me of the greatest gratification which imagination desired, and so far did this longing influence all my thoughts and wishes, that I often fancied my race on earth would be run, if circumstances allowed me to realise it.

Ignorant to the last degree of the fine arts, of music, painting, and sculpture, I have nevertheless a strong feeling in favour of all; and as I had heard the great artistes of the last twenty years, from Madame Fodor down to Mademoiselle Cruvelli, and from Ambrogetti to Mario, and seen the studios of Naples and Rome, I languished for the hour when I might behold the wonder of ancient art, "the statue that enchants the world," as well as feast on all the treasures that "*Florence la Belle*" contains.

I thank fate that on this occasion an ardent wish

was gratified, and the Assurance Office, where my life is insured, may thank Heaven, if it please, that I am spared still to pay the annual premium, though I have seen the Venus de' Medici, not to mention the Venus of the Capitol, the Venus Calpighi, the Venuses of Thorwaldsen, of Canova, Gibson, and Macdonald, besides a few "alive and real."

Whether the same current of good luck which led me to the Tuscan capital, may yet transfer me to Otaheite, I cannot undertake to determine; but I fear that modern navigators have diminished the interest that Captain Cook excited in a warm and romantic breast; and that the introduction of trading missionaries and new-made rum, has destroyed that Arcadian innocence which fascinated our early youth.

It was thus, combining public and private motives, that I embarked at Genoa in one of the many steamers which touch at all the Italian ports, and it was thus I landed at Leghorn. What, however, was my astonishment to find, that though the war had ceased in Lombardy and Piedmont, it had just commenced here, and that hostilities were not directed against Austrian domination, but against the paternal government of the Grand Duke. In fact, I found the city of Leghorn in open revolt, barricades erected in every commanding situation, and the forts on which the safety of the place depended, in the hands of the national guard, or rather of the republican mob who usurped that title.

It was with some difficulty I discovered a clear

road to the hotel, and when I went round the town to collect information, and see my friends, more than once I was exposed to the ignorant rifle practice of the insurgents.

The worst of it was, that neither the people themselves, nor the more respectable citizens, could understand what the revolt was intended to produce, or for what purpose it had been made. Some persons said that the new cabinet was retrograde; others, that the interests of Leghorn were sacrificed to those of Florence; and the rest, that the merchants were too rich, and that their strong boxes were a legitimate source of plunder.

Under the conjoint operation of these three reasons, the government stores had been broken into, and all the fire-arms removed; the forts had been scaled, and the troops who manned them ejected; the garrison had been withdrawn to Pisa; the railway communication suspended; and an actual separation pronounced between the free city of Leghorn, and the corrupt and defective government of Florence.

An attempt had been made to check the progress of the insurrection, two or three days before my arrival, and a certain number of cavalry and infantry had been drawn up in order of battle in the grand square, with the hope that the people would become alarmed for their personal safety, and return to their usual occupations; but as it was soon discovered that the troops had orders not to fire, the demon-

stration of useless force only made things worse, and the mob from behind barricades, and from the corners of streets, shot down the soldiery.

One charge from the Dragoons, one volley from the troops, would have dispersed the cowardly assailants; but the Commander-in-chief executed too literally his orders, and in sparing the lives of a republican mob, he allowed those of his own men to be sacrificed with impunity.

Such a farce could not exist for many hours, and as the audacity of the mob still increased, the survivors were marched off the ground, and once more retired to Pisa; it being one of the curious features of the civil war, that Pisa and Florence remained faithful to the Grand Duke, and that Leghorn alone had all the glory of the insurrection.

The revolt and everything connected with it at first appeared to be paradoxical; but we soon came to understand that it was the republican party—to this hour the plague of the Peninsula—which was at work. By it the people had been excited into words of insubordination; by it, had been goaded on into acts of plunder, and murder; and by it the train of that miserable and impossible system of government, which had a brief existence at Rome, and in Tuscany, and which failed in every other part of Italy, was laid.

There was, in reality, no cause of complaint existing against the Grand Duke, or the system under which Leghorn had arrived to wealth and

unceasing prosperity. The port was free; the custom-house only existed at the inland gates; and every article of consumption was delivered to the householder free of duty or excise.

One bad consequence of this great liberty, however, was, that though the principal merchants were natives, or foreigners of wealth and respectability, an influx of strangers of all nations and of all classes had taken place, among whom there were adventurers of the worst description, and the very refuse of society, who flocked from Corsica, Sardinia, and other islands, in search of employment, or plunder, as the occasion offered.

Every one who has landed at Leghorn, knows to what insolence and brutality families are exposed from the porters, who have rights and privileges that exist in no other place. Your own servants are not allowed to touch your carpet-bags or portmanteaux. One set of porters hands them to another, and even when delivered at the door of the hotel, a third set of *facchini* have the right to carry them to your rooms.

In vain you remonstrate against this multiplication of useless labour, and the exorbitance of the charges. There is no appeal, as the authorities candidly admit that they are compelled to allow this state of things to exist, lest the porters should execute their repeated threats of setting fire to the town, and of plundering all public and private mansions.

It was to those rascals that the city was delivered

over at the period of my arrival, and I know not how much I was forced to contribute, not only for transporting a carpet-bag and portmanteau, but for permission to pass the barricades, of which they were the self-appointed guardians.

Some of the principal merchants had gone as a kind of deputation from the people to the government, but I did not hear that any good had been effected by them. In fact, it was not civil language that was required, but a determined Commander-in-chief, with a *carte blanche* for instructions, and a few discharges of grape-shot to cool the courage of the crowd.

The cabinet was *poltron* in an eminent degree; and, from the dread of becoming unpopular, it allowed open rebellion to triumph, and the commencement of a system to be organised, which terminated at its maturity by the expulsion of the Grand Duke, and the ministers themselves, who thus temporised when they should have done their duty.

As I seek not in these volumes to do more than give a narrative of my own adventures, I abstain from entering as fully as I might into the causes which led to this unfortunate state of things. I reserve that topic, with others of an equally grave nature, for a more serious work, should the public demand it; and I have only now to add, that I found Leghorn suffering from all the consequences of popular revolt, and dreading that every hour the mob would resort to violence and plunder.

Fortunately, however, for the town and its property, another source of amusement presented itself, in the person of M. Guerazzi, now undergoing, for his good or bad deeds, imprisonment at Florence; and as he spoke for hours every day from a balcony in the grand Piazza, the mob was so fascinated by his eloquence, that it abandoned everything else to listen to, and applaud him.

M. Guerazzi contrived, from the position of an humble advocate, to elevate himself to the head of the government, but he protests he did so in the interest of the Grand Duke; and it is generally understood he proposed to tolerate that personage as a nullity, whilst all power was vested in his own hands.

At the period I allude to he was blowing hot and cold; exciting the people one hour against the government, and explaining in the next that Leopold was the best of sovereigns; and that if a thorough reform of all abuses took place, and a popular administration was formed, no change in the reigning dynasty need be made.

The ambitious advocate succeeded in making himself indispensable to both parties, and for a time he was successful in all his plans; but others more violent pushed him from his stool, and when the reign of legality was restored, he became one of the first sufferers—or victims, if you like the word better.

The English merchants, though liberally inclined,

as our commerce generally is, were heartily tired of this uncertain state; and as they knew too well of what inflammable materials the population was composed, they lived in constant dread that on them and their property the popular vengeance would be directed.

I remember dining with one of the most estimable of those gentlemen, and I shall not easily forget the nervous anxiety exhibited by him, and every member of the family. We could hear the shouts of the mob from his mansion; and as there was neither a civil or military force organised to repress riot, we dreaded every moment that the demonstration would be converted into one of rapine and violence.

The merchant was well known and respected, and his family were ever forward in the lists of charity and public benevolence; but no character is sacred to a licentious crowd, who seek to profit, as well as their leaders, by revolution.

M. Guerazzi's influence, however, calmed the impending storm, and before I left Leghorn I was glad to see the barricades one by one removed, and the course of commercial enterprise resuming its activity.

The facility with which the barricades were levelled, as well as erected, may be explained by the fact, that the *facchini* were paid for both jobs, and with double and triple price for the latter. I gladly contributed a dollar to the good cause; and as

every one who wore a decent coat was equally liberal, the work of destruction went merrily on.

Still the authority of the Grand Duke was merely nominal, and a kind of Provisional Government ruled the town; but as that body was composed of men who had something to lose, and as M. Guerazzi had no inclination to push the insurrection beyond a certain point, gradually, and step by step, the spirit of order prevailed, and honest citizens went to bed without apprehension for the coming day.

At this period the word "republic" was not heard, but those who reflected, saw that such was the fate reserved for this fine country, as Italians do not understand what constitutional doctrine means, and a strong party was behind the scenes, deluding the people with false promises, and preparing the way for their own advancement by the overthrow of social order.

The weak Grand Duke, and his most imbecile government, unable, or rather incapable, of making head against the movement, conceded every point as soon as it was demanded, so that in the course of a few weeks he had no other alternative than that of "sending for Guerrazzi, or being sent for by him," and of abdicating not the name but the substance of power in his favour.

The miserable condition to which the second city of Tuscany was now reduced, explains in a most striking manner the weakness of those Utopian doctrines by which it is imagined, that a people

can be governed by mildness and benevolence alone without the intervention of any active physical force.

Tuscany was, perhaps, the freest and happiest country in Europe practically, though not theoretically, and the sovereign was so generally beloved, that not a single voice had, during the course of many years, been raised against him. He governed literally for the people, and not by the people, and though no constitution existed, every good that a constitution could bestow, was enjoyed by all classes of society, without the corruption and expense which representative forms generally necessitate.

The land, as it was commonly said, "flowed with milk and honey;" and the Grand Duchy approached nearer the state of Arçadian happiness than, perhaps, any other part of Europe. Florence, ever the favoured seat of art, was the gayest and most social city in the Peninsula; strangers flocked to it from every side, and a kind of luxurious indolence prevailed, which fascinated even the least susceptible. No complaints were heard, because, in truth, no cause of complaint was given, and, as the government and the people were identified by the same interests and the same tastes, the utmost cordiality between the latter and their rulers, existed.

All this was done without the aid of military severity; and so deficient was the Grand Duke in that respect, that one of the first acts of Charles Albert was to send instructors of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, for his use, in order that the Tuscan

contingent might take the field with something like a regular organisation.

But this was a fair weather system which existed more on sufferance than otherwise, and at the first breath of revolution the whole social edifice fell to pieces. Had one single regiment of good soldiers been organised, the few who fomented the revolt would have fled before it, as chaff is driven before the wind, but the troops that were enrolled, had no idea of a soldier's duty, and the ministry, unwilling to give orders for shedding the people's blood, allowed armed men to be shot at from behind barricades, as at Leghorn, and looked to no other remedy for preventing further mischief, than the withdrawing them from the place where their presence was most required.

Strange, however, to say, that whilst Leghorn was in open revolt, not another large place had followed its example; Pisa, Sienna, and other cities of note, remained as faithful as the metropolis, until a much later period; when they were abandoned by the Grand Duke.

It was only at Leghorn that an unbridled license prevailed, and even there, notwithstanding all the elements of disorder that arose from the presence of so many strangers and adventurers, had the soldiery been called on to act with vigour, the insurrection might have been suppressed on the very day that it originated.

In order to exemplify this indifference to military

rule in the most striking manner, I need only mention that the strong forts of the city were carried by a half-armed mob, the garrisons that held them abandoning the ground because no one was present to give an order; and that these forts were maintained against the government, though a hundred men might have regained the whole within an hour.

I remember the transport of indignation with which a British naval officer was seized, when he saw the strong places of the city delivered over, one by one, to a noisy crowd of *facchini*, and the fury with which he raved when he found that no attempt was made to recover them. "Let me have only one hundred men," said he, "and in an hour the whole are again in the Grand Duke's possession; and had even only fifty marines occupied them on the day they surrendered, the mob would have been kept out."

In all other parts of the Peninsula, great exertions had been made to sustain a standing army, and in Piedmont, the Roman States, and Naples, a respectable force had been organised; but in Tuscany an opposite principle had been established, which answered perfectly well in the "Trades," but which fell to pieces on the first appearance of a foul wind.

Let no one, therefore, believe that a country can be well governed without a military force, of greater or less importance. The people in general may be happy and content, faithful to the crown, and obedient to a paternal government, but every now and then circumstances will arise which deserve

repression, and though moral force goes a great way, I fear, such is the perversity of human nature, that it will go much further if supported by physical strength.

There are in all countries ambitious and clever men, who are not content with the position which they hold, and who will push the masses forward, in the hope that they themselves will profit by a change. Advocates without clients are most commonly foremost in the race, and if you seriously examine all the revolutions that have taken place, not only in the Italian Peninsula, but in Europe, you will find that men learned or unlearned in the law, have raised and directed the storm.

In this climate particularly, the power of eloquence is great, and no government can last where the tribune and the press are free, as they became here, to licentiousness. There is only one power that can be successfully opposed to check the headlong torrent, and that is the strong hand of the law, backed by the still stronger arms of the bayonet and the sword.

It is not a military despotism that I advocate or defend—it is merely such an infusion of the principle as may be necessary for the protection of the State, and the security of the Crown, and of existing institutions. The strength of the dose must vary with the necessity of the case and the condition of the patient, and I only go the length of saying, that if a reasonable degree of military spirit had existed in Tuscany in 1848, no revolution could have taken

place, and the events I am now deploring, would not have occurred.

The Tuscans are the most refined and amiable people in Italy; politeness seems to be innate, and not educational, in them; and they of all others the least require coercion by a strong hand: yet we have seen what slight guarantees refinement and luxurious indolence are against popular innovation, and how necessary it is that a protecting power, stronger than the will of the people, should exist.

A flock of sheep presents the most harmless picture of pastoral life, yet the shepherd's dog is needed to keep them within bounds; and when the wolf is at hand, what other protection has the master and his flock, than the fangs of their watchful and patient guard.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FLORENCE.

I ENTERED Florence *la Belle* with a big stick in my hand, and the prospect of a duel before me. The big stick saved me from the duel, and as the story serves to illustrate what Italian liberalism at that period was, and as it may be useful to other travellers, I may as well tell it exactly as it occurred.

At the last railway station I met a nobleman from Bologna, who had been on the staff of Charles Albert, and with whom I was on friendly terms at the camp. After a warm recognition had taken place, and the usual number of *caros* and *carissimos* were interchanged, he suddenly exclaimed—

"How do you feel after the dressing you have received in this morning's paper?"

"What dressing, and what paper?"

"Nothing less has been said than that you are a political agent of the British Government, and the favourite spy of Lord Palmerston."

"In what paper?"

"The ——."

"You must come with me at once to the office of the journal. By Heaven I will break the rascally editor's head. You see I am well provided" (showing the stick).

"I am in despair, my dear fellow, but I am leaving Florence by the next train; let me present you to my friend, Count ——, he is your man. You can depend upon him. My dear Count, this gentleman I answer for. See him, I entreat you, well through a disagreeable business."

The Count accepted the commission, and promised to call on me at the Hôtel du Nord; but, in the mean time, I reflected on the proper course to take, and thinking it more prudent to act on English than on Italian advice, I sought out an old friend, who I knew was resident in Florence, and finding him ready and willing, I procured a copy of the paper, and proceeded to study the paragraph, and to prepare a plan of operations.

The paragraph was clear and outspoken. It named me by name, and cautioned all Italian liberals against placing confidence in me, as I was nothing better than a secret political agent of the British Government, and the favourite spy of Lord Palmerston.

It declared that I had betrayed the constitutional cause in Lombardy and Piedmont, and that I was bound on a tour of discovery in midland and central

Italy, for the purpose of serving Downing-street with the latest news, and of playing the traitor wherever I went.

I leave you, my dear Sir, or Madam, to judge what the feelings of a person were, who came, after so many years of fruitless attempts to see the Venus de' Medici, within sight of the temple which contained the glorious relic, and who found himself involved in a most awkward and disagreeable affair, which might prevent him entering it.

A duel, with its consequences, was before me, and it appeared as if the termination of life, which, with so much levity, I imagined might take place in the gratification of a most ardent desire, was in reality to occur at the gates of the building where the treasure lay, before, and not after, the longing thirst was appeased.

Still, as business must be attended to, even that of "coffee and pistols for two," I arranged, in concert with my friend, an ingenious device for testing the game of my libeller, and for vindicating, at the same time, the honour of "Our Own Correspondent."

It was very foolish to take so much trouble about an offensive paragraph in a journal of the second order; but the word "spy" stuck in my throat, and I determined to obtain an humble apology, or chastise the writer.

The next morning, at ten o'clock, a stout-built Irishman, not over young, but with plenty of work still in him, might be seen walking up and down in

a certain street where the office of the journal in question lay. He held a tremendous cudgel in his hand, and cast his eyes from one side of the *strada* to the other, as if looking out for some one to whom the said shillelagh was to be applied.

At the same time might be seen in the editor's room of a Florence journal, which room overlooked the street, two men engaged in serious conversation, the one pointing to the cudgel from the open window, the other looking very pale, and by no means pleased at the nature of the communication which was so unexpectedly made to him.

As I subsequently learned, the dialogue between my friend and the man of pen and ink took the following turn:

"Do you see that wild Irishman, with a big stick in his hand, who is talking to himself, and apparently bent on mischief?"

"I have been observing him for the last half hour."

"Do you know whom he is looking for?"

"No."

"Or on whose back the stick is to fall?"

"No."

"Where did you get the paragraph which appeared in yesterday's paper, denouncing a certain Englishman, Mr. ——, as a spy?"

"We received it from Milan."

"You did not expect, of course, to find Mr. —— in Florence?"

"Oh, no. I am told he is at Turin."

"There he is in person."

"What, the stout man with the big stick?"

"The stout man with the big stick."

"*Caro*, I do not like your looks."

"Nor *his*, *carissimo*, I presume. The plain fact, my dear fellow, is, the wild Irishman has seen the libellous paragraph, and has come to Florence for the sole purpose of breaking the head of the author, or of the editor who inserted it."

"This is an awkward affair."

"You will find it so, I assure you; and I now call on you, at his request, to offer a choice of three things—a full and ample apology, to be dictated by him, and inserted in to-morrow's paper; a meeting in the usual form; or the application of that cudgel to your shoulders."

"My dear sir, we know you very well, and respect all you say; but what you demand is impossible. How can I make an apology in my own paper?"

"Then you fight—coffee and pistols?"

"Oh, oh. Your friend is a regular assassin."

"Or the cudgel?"

"I don't like that big stick."

"Be quick, as I see he is getting impatient."

"Oh, oh."

"Do you know that Mr. ——, is he a spy?"

"Oh, oh."

"Do you know anything about him?"

"Oh, oh."

"If you have done wrong, why should you be ashamed to say so?"

"Oh, oh."

"Be quick, my dear fellow, or in ten minutes you will have the cudgel about your ears."

The dialogue ended by my friend arranging with the valiant editor, that he should call on me at the hotel, write at my dictation an humble apology, and allow it to appear in a prominent place in next day's publication. Within an hour I had the favour of a visit from my cowardly colleague, and the apology which I dictated was seen the next morning in all the luxury of his best type.

When I called on my friends, among whom I had the honour to number the English and French ministers, I was complimented on the termination of an awkward affair, and so far the apology did me good; but, on reflection, I was never more angry with myself than on this occasion, and I am still of opinion that I acted a very unwise and uncalled-for part.

The editor was a cowardly republican, who lived by libelling his political opponents, and of what service was it to society, or what gratification did it bring me, to make him still more despicable than he was. We must not "gild refined gold," neither need we "blacken the blackamoor," and I have since so resolutely acted on the rule I then made, that, though various calumnies have been published against me, I have not condescended to notice them.

There are occasions when in England a gentleman is called on to defend his character, unworthily attacked in a public journal; but the liberal newspaper press is so low in the Italian peninsula, that no honourable man suffers in society from the imputations cast by it on his public or private life.

The word "spy" is certainly difficult of digestion, particularly by a correspondent who knows full well that if he does not openly avow his profession, he is certain to be ranked as a secret agent of one government or the other. I never have failed to make it known who and what I was, and whenever politics are discussed in my presence, I exclaim, "Take care, sir, what you say, for I am 'Our Own Correspondent.'"

I have more than once resisted the cogent reasons offered by those in foreign lands to whom I was addressed, for concealing my line of business, and I remember one instance in particular which, as it serves to illustrate the case, and may be useful to those who follow me, I will introduce here, though I have even to cross the Atlantic to bring it in.

On presenting my letters of introduction in a capital some thousand miles away, to Her Britannic Majesty's minister, His Excellency said—

"May I request you not to speak of the business which has brought you. Newspaper correspondence is not understood, and your arrival here may create embarrassments for you and me."

"I am sorry," replied I, "that I cannot take your

advice, for long experience has shown me, that the correspondent who conceals his object is suspected of being a spy. The questions we ask, the tone of discussion we undertake, are so different from those adopted in general society, that every one will be curious to know who the man is, and what are his motives for being thus inquisitive, and for want of a proper answer, the word 'spy' will be applied. Moreover, your Excellency, I am so well known, that before the day is over, I am sure to meet several persons who knew all I was doing in Europe, and will it be pleasant for you, or me, that my secret shall be exposed by them? Why, on entering the hotel, yesterday, the foreman of a Paris tailor who has been tempted to settle here, recognised me; and, I dare say, that ere I take leave this morning some one or other will come in to see you, who was acquainted with my sayings and doings in the old country."

As I spoke, the doors of the drawing-room flew open, and the servant announced, "M. le Baron de N——," and the Baron on seeing me uttered a cry of surprise.

"What, 'Times,' are you here? Is it not wonderful wherever I go, I am sure to meet Our Own Correspondent!"

The gentleman in question was one of the secretaries of the French Legation, with whom I had been on friendly terms at the Foreign Office in Paris. He knew me well, as to him, in some degree, was entrusted the management of the

friendly relations which then subsisted between the government of Louis Philippe and all the London morning journals—relations, let it be understood, which had nothing in them dishonourable to either party.

As soon as the conversation was renewed between our Minister and me, I said—

"You see, sir, that I am right; what would our resident countrymen have thought of a man who joined in political conversations without warning all parties present of his exceptional character?"

"You are quite right," replied his Excellency; "I see the whole force of your reasoning, and in order that no mistake shall exist, come and dine with me to-morrow, and I will ask my official friends with some of our leading merchants, and introduce you in form to them."

At Florence, I had the honour of being presented to one of the best diplomatists and most perfect gentlemen I have ever met with. I mean the late Sir George Hamilton. To him I was made known, by a confidential letter from another of our ministers, and I am happy to say that he understood me and the object of my mission immediately, and that he communicated with me as unreservedly as the nature of his duties permitted.

Unfortunately for the country, and for his family, the complaint to which in two years afterwards he fell a victim, prevented him from entering as fully as he desired into the discharge of the active labours of

the mission. But his mental vigour was unimpaired, and the forms which he could not fulfil, were undertaken with due efficiency by his excellent and talented brother, Mr. Charles Hamilton, and by the Secretary of Legation, the Honourable Mr. Scarlet, assisted by the paid *attaché*, Mr. Barron.

To serve Sir George Hamilton was a labour of love, and I never knew a mission where so much cordial good feeling existed. The honours of a most hospitable mansion were done by Lady Caroline, the wife of Mr. Charles, and the Legation under her auspices was one of the most brilliant in that luxurious capital.

The political situation, however, was one of great difficulty, as the good sense of our minister did not allow him to deceive himself or his government on the rapid progress of a revolutionary movement; whilst at the same time the supposed sympathy which existed in favour of Italian independence in Downing-street, required that no cause of discontent should be offered to the so-called constitutional party. It was met, however, with considerable tact, the soundest advice being given to the Grand Duke, and as much seeming favour accorded to the honest liberals as they could expect. Sir George saw clearly that the state machine was running rapidly down hill, and that nothing could arrest it, as the sovereign was utterly incapable of protecting himself or the country, and the ministers seemed completely paralysed.

The only man who showed energy or decision was our Leghorn friend, M. Guerazzi, and as he contrived to make the Grand Duke understand that his first object was the preservation of the throne for him, in the course of a few weeks the whole responsibility was thrown on his own shoulders. This was exactly the point to which the plans of the intriguing candidate tended, and first minister he did become. But as "he went up like the rocket, he came down like the stick," and revolution proved in the end to be stronger than its champion.

It is said that our minister recommended the Grand Duke to send for Guerazzi; and, to tell the truth, I am not in a condition to contradict the rumour, though I am far from giving it implicit confidence; but if Sir George did conscientiously feel, that by no other means impending anarchy could be stopped, he was not the man to hesitate in accepting a minor evil to save the country from a greater misfortune.

I do not pretend to know what actually took place, as Tuscany in fact was of no political importance in Italy, and our minister reposed so much confidence in me, that I purposely avoided inquiring into those questions where he might to a certain extent be compromised; all I felt was, that Sir George Hamilton was a thoroughly honest man, and that he fulfilled his instructions in the most conscientious manner.

I found in Tuscany, with the exception of the radical adventurers in Leghorn, nearly all classes in

favour of order and a strong government, and at Florence in particular, an absolute hatred to constitutional forms. I am also sorry to add, that the presence of an Austrian force was strongly desired, as the only means of controlling a revolution that menaced person and property; and I never went into society of the first rank, without hearing that wish audibly and unreservedly expressed.

As, while condemning the outrageous conduct of the republican *clique*, and the imbecility of the constitutional party, I have always maintained, as I do at this hour, that the presence of the Tedeschi in Italy is a disgrace to the civilisation of the age, I was shocked to hear the nobility and gentry of Florence give utterance to these sentiments; and I remember on one occasion I could not help exclaiming—"I am sorry to find that I am the only Italian here."

As I was among friends, the expression was forgiven; but one after another of the society undertook to explain, that for them it was a question of life or death, and that if foreign bayonets were not there to protect them, they were unable to protect themselves.

A national guard existed at Florence, which was commanded by men attached to the government of the Grand Duke—but so indifferent to public duty were these citizen soldiers, that not one man in twenty would have answered the roll-call, if barricades had been raised by the mob.

More than one English proprietor of land near the capital, commanded battalions or companies, no doubt for the purpose of having protection near at hand at the hour of danger; but I never heard that the national guard went willingly under fire, and if those gentlemen now preserve their "dirty acres," they may thank the Austrians, and not their own holiday soldiers.

The Tuscan contingent behaved admirably while at Curtatone, as I have shown in the course of this narrative, and I never heard their gallantry questioned during the whole of the campaign; but at home the character of the people was so exquisitely pacific, that not the slightest resistance was offered by them to a few violent and needy adventurers.

Even at this hour, ask every man of property in Tuscany, whether or not he wishes the Austrians to be removed, and he will exclaim, "No, no, no; we are lost and ruined without them." In other words, he tells you the party of order is so weak, and so faint-hearted, that it would strike its colours to the violent liberals if the bayonets of the Imperial eagle were not at hand.

It is lamentable that no public spirit exists in a country so well worth fighting for; but the Tuscans lead a life of luxurious indolence, and pleasure, in one shape or other, is the pursuit of all.

Among the many houses where strangers were hospitably received, the villa of the celebrated Madame Catalani was one of the most frequented.

As I had the pleasure to know this magnificent artiste and most amiable woman, in England, one of my earliest visits was to her, and as she had been on terms of intimacy with my relatives in London, she welcomed me as a friend, and overpowered me with attention.

She was still, though of mature years, majestic in form, and I might say beautiful in face, with such a combination of dignity and warmth in her manner, that all who saw her now, as in youth, loved and worshipped her.

She was surrounded by a numerous family who lived upon her looks, and sought to anticipate every wish, and by a crowd of friends whose devotion she fully appreciated.

Catalani was born to be a queen, and instead of ruling the stage, she ought to have graced a throne, as her moral worth was as transcendant as the beauty of her person; but never did the profession of an artiste receive more honour than at her hands, and she advanced it to that height of dignity to which Mrs. Siddons raised the character of an English actress.

On the occasion of her last visit to England, I was invited more than once to spend a day at her villa at Richmond, and there the few privileged persons admitted to her intimacy saw what the great Catalani really was in domestic life.

The drawing-room windows opened on the lawn, and her great delight was to wander from one to the

other, as fancy dictated, and when she thought no one was observing what she did.

Her friends understood this amiable caprice of not being noticed, and whilst we chatted together, read the newspaper, or the last novel, she flew from place to place, to pluck a rose, to visit her aviary, to make a hasty sketch, to run over the notes of the piano, and to indulge in fantastic warblings, imitations of birds, or trials of vocal skill, that thrilled every heart.

Of the grandeur of the *prima donna's* professional style the world had full cognisance, but of the pure and simple melody of her voice, none but the favoured few had any true idea. She was more tragic than Madame Pasta, as mellifluous as Madame Rossi, and as soul-subduing as Jenny Lind, and when she indulged in daring flights of musical combination, it seemed as if a lark was soaring to the heavens, or as if a canary bird was straining its wildest notes.

Perhaps it was only a single word she uttered, or a single bar she went through, or it might be the part or whole of some favourite air, but it was the songstress of nature unfettered by the rules of art; when suddenly voice and gesture would change, and, as if by magic, we saw the tragic actress crossing the stage in all the majesty of lyrical power.

If one word was said, or the slightest applause given, the charm was broken for that morning, and the child of nature became the high-bred lady,

doing the honours of her house with unaffected grace.

Such as Catalani then was, I understood from her family she still remained, and nothing could be more exquisite than the occasional flights of song in which she indulged in her daily rambles through the fine grounds of her romantic villa.

Alas! the divine songstress did not live much longer to charm her friends, and adorn society. She fell, a few months after the period I speak of, a victim to the cholera at Lyons, to which place she had fled after the Grand Duke abandoned Florence.

CHAPTER XXIV.

FLORENCE (*continued*).

I AM a good Roman Catholic, not good in a religious or moral sense, I have the humility to say, but a faithful son of the old church, who never will desert its standard; still I am not blind to the faults of many of those who preach by precept and not by example, and I enjoy a good joke, even though it is perpetrated at the expense of an over-reaching community, such as compose the three clerical editors of the *Observatore Romano* in the Eternal City, or the saintly and cheap interment society in *Florence la Belle*.

A gentleman, I believe a Spaniard or Mexican, who had been ever remarkable for his religious zeal and his strict adherence to all the precepts of the good fathers, who daily went to mass, and once a week at least invited the parish priests and curates to dine with him, had the misfortune, whilst I was at Florence, to lose a young wife, to whom he was truly and tenderly attached; she succumbed

to a long and dangerous illness, so that the excellent man had so much time to prepare for the fatal blow, that he was also enabled to enter into all the calculations which, as a person of moderate fortune and of prudent habits, he was bound to do.

The first few hours after the beloved wife's last sigh, were spent in tears and prayers, till at length he gained strength and composure to receive the ghostly director of the society above alluded to, and discuss with him the manner in which the funeral should "be performed."

As the stranger was of a very old and much respected family, it was necessary that due honour should be paid to one who bore his name in this life, and at the same time his economical habits did not permit him to make a large outlay. The difficulty was great, but he met it in an able manner, and it was settled between the widower and the reverend father, that the whole charge should not exceed 300 francesconi, or about 70*l.* of our money, one hundred of which were to be expended in the funeral decorations, and the other two hundred in masses for the repose of the soul of the deceased.

Now, as the entire sum went into the coffers of the community, whether as meal or malt, and as the proud stranger was so anxious to have due honours rendered to the corpse, it was determined by the conclave, that a funeral usually charged 200 dollars, should be ordered, and only one-third of the whole amount be reserved for the requiem.

The affair was managed in first-rate style; I know not how many horses were turned out, how many plumes nodded over the hearse, or how many wax-lights were consumed on that occasion, all I know is, Florence was in amaze at such unexpected magnificence, and every one said what a noble-minded fellow Mr. So-and-so was, to spend out of his limited means, so great a sum in rendering the last honours to his beloved.

The mourner behaved remarkably well; his tears were of the saltest brine, and his kerchief of the most immaculate white; his black coat had the Parisian cut, and his look of despair was borrowed from the *grand opera*. The funeral was "performed," and the widower removed to the house of a friend, that friend being a charming *Française*, separated from her husband, and of course the intimate of the deceased, and there, the next morning after the solemn act, he received the reverend fathers in solemn audience, sobs and sighs mingling with every word, and floods of tears being the order of the day.

The priests spoke of resignation to the will of Providence, and of the necessity of an effort being made to support an irreparable disaster, till at length the real object of the visit appeared in the shape of a long memorandum, beginning with so many dozen of wax-lights, and ending with masses for the dead, the whole being summed up by the figure of 3 and two zeros, namely, 300 dollars; and prefaced by a gentle hope that the wishes of

"the bereaved one," had been complied with in a proper manner.

The widower was profuse in his expressions of gratitude, and pressed with both palms the hands of his reverend friends, but what was the astonishment of the latter, when they saw him lay on the table only one hundred crowns, and heard him exclaim at the same time, "There, dear friends, are the hundred dollars for the funeral; the masses you need not say, as my wife was a saint on earth, and she must be, ere this, in heaven. Indeed I had a vision last night, when I saw her rising from the tomb conducted by an angel of glory. God bless you, dear gentlemen, *pax vobis.*"

A friend of mine, who was present, gave me a description of the scene, and it would do your heart good to hear him describe the rage and indignation of the holy fathers. Each seemed to say, "You, your wife, and the angel of glory, all be ——." But such words, though they may exist in priestly hearts, are not heard from priestly lips; and the triumvirate retired with a dead loss to the community, of fifty crowns, the funeral, in fact, having cost one hundred and fifty.

I was recounting this example of sharp practice to my excellent friend, that incomparable writer, Mr. Lever, who enjoyed it as first-rate, but who immediately *capped* it with an Irish story, as he never fails to do, when anything racy is said before him.

I hope the tale is not in his published works, and that I am not committing piracy at the expense of "Harry Lorrequer," though he is so full of fun and original fancy he can spare me more than I now take.

A parish priest in the south of Ireland, who found it difficult to make the two ends of the year meet by the ordinary contributions of the flock, contrived to manage the sum required by saying masses for the dead, that is to say, for the relief of the souls suffering in purgatory, and as a much quoted line says—"it is a good and wholesome thought to pray for the dead," and as it is declared in a more solemn manner, "such a sin will neither be forgiven in this world nor in the *next*," thereby proving that there is forgiveness in the next world, Father Malone managed, by expatiating on these texts, to keep body and soul together.

It chanced that among those who contributed to this *rint*, was an old reprobate, whose son was cut short in a career of vice by a mortal blow on the head which he received at the fair of Knockpatrick, but who, getting tired of the monthly disbursements, made up his mind to let his scapegrace get out of purgatory as best he could, without any further assistance from him.

He was deaf to all the hints the parish priest or the curates gave, till one morning meeting the reverend old rector in a place from whence he could not escape, the latter said—

"Malachy, I had a vision last night, and I saw your son in purgatory."

"Sorry to hear such bad news," replied Malachy, "as I had some reason to believe that your reverence's prayers had produced the usual effect, and that he was long since free; I know at least many is the white shilling I paid for the same, and if Larry is not out of that nasty place it is not my fault."

"True, enough, honest man, but Larry was a bad boy, a very bad boy indeed, and it takes a dozen times as many masses, at least, to wash him clean, as would be necessary for any other of the parishioners."

"Sure enough, Father James," broke in the old hypocrite, "sure enough, Larry was a bad boy."

"I have good news, however, to tell you," added the reverend father; "when I saw him in the vision last night, Larry had his head and his arms free, and to tell you the truth, some twenty shillings more would clear the rest of his body."

"Oh! then, sir, are you telling me truth, or are you joking with a poor old man?"

"True as that pork is pig; I saw him with my two eyes, and indeed it was at his request I am now speaking."

"In that case," cried out the hardened sinner, "the devil a shilling I'll give at all, mass or no mass it's all one now; Larry has broken out of every jail in Munster, and if he had his head and arms free,

he has by this time broken out of purgatory too. Where his head can go his body can pass, and his arms and legs are made to the same pattern."

The moral, or rather the contrast of the two stories is, that Madame So-and-so had no occasion of masses, because she was a saint, nor Larry, because he was a confirmed reprobate—that the husband saved his dollars by virtue of his wife's goodness, and Malachy by reason of his son's crimes.

Extremes meet, and thus I bring Kilrush and Florence together, and so it happens that one of Harry Lorrequer's tales has found its way into my stale jest-book, to be spoiled in the cooking, if it has not been already produced at his own table, or hashed to insipidity, like minced veal, if stolen cold from his well-stocked larder.

It was said that great political excitement prevailed at Florence during the few days which I spent there; but I saw nothing of it, and I believe it was altogether confined to the noisy liberals, who, urged on by Guerazzi, were provoking the crisis of which he was soon after to take advantage.

What I saw was a never-ceasing round of dinners and balls, and all the delights that distinguish the modern Capua; the daily promenade and réunion of the *cascine*, and the evening lounge of the *casino*, the unceasing hospitalities of the Villa Normanby, then occupied by Sir George Hamilton; the charming society that the Count Walewski and his beautiful bride assembled, the mahogany of Baron ———,

the prince of foreign bankers, Milesian as he his, and Captain Boreum's big dog.

What was Guerazzi to me whilst so many aristocratic beauties bloomed in the gardens of the Grand Duke, or appeared at night still more lovely by the blaze of a well-decorated ball-room, and what were the political intrigues then going on when compared with the more numerous social combinations which puzzled wiser heads than mine, and of which the *dénouement* when discovered, was not worth the pain of having looked for.

Among the most forward votaries of pleasure, many fair daughters of Albion were observed, and of them much more was said than probably they merited. Still the world was busy with their fame, and every hour brought some new adventure, and some new mishap, on the carpet.

There was one strange *rencontre* which happened at this time, that I would gladly tell, if I am not committing an indiscretion in so doing; but as the original editor of the "Morning Post" used to say, "Nothing shall appear in my paper which a young lady of seventeen may not read to her grandmama at the breakfast table," to which the sub-editor used to add, *aside*, "provided the grandmama is as deaf and as stupid as you are." So I declare that nothing shall appear in my book, of which any old lady can complain, even though that old lady be the public, and deaf likewise; and with that reserve I take the liberty of going on.

. An English gentleman of rank and fortune, and his wife, accompanied by a tutor and governess for their children, came to spend a few months at Bologna. Unfortunately certain causes of discontent arose in the family, and I am grieved to say, that the husband became infatuated with that *belle brunette*, the *gouvernante*, whilst the lady had the folly and the infamy to listen to the handsome tutor.

All this went on without either party having the least suspicion of the criminal conduct of the other, till at length it was agreed between Monsieur and Mademoiselle, and Madame and *le jeune homme*, that an elopement should take place, the husband calculating that his wife would take care of the children, whilst the unnatural and selfish mother, argued in the same manner with respect to her lord and master.

The plans of escape were silently matured on both sides, without the least cause of suspicion being given by either, till at length the hour and the day were fixed, namely, that of the afternoon visit to the promenade, the mutual calculation being, that a few hours' absence might not be then remarked, after which pursuit would be fruitless.

It chanced, however, the fugitives left Bologna nearly at the same hour, the one taking the lower road, the other the mountain route, and that both arrived nearly at the same time at the same hotel at Florence. The wife thought that the husband came in her pursuit, whilst the husband imagined

that his wife had followed him, and so each again started on a different road, the former party taking the overland way to Rome by Radacofani, the latter hurrying by the first train to Leghorn.

The friends of the family at Bologna protected the children, ignorant altogether of the parents' crimes, and some weeks elapsed before the truth became known to the guilty parties; that the Honourable Mr. A. B. knew that his wife had eloped with his tutor, or that Lady Eleanor A. B. discovered that her husband had carried off, or was carried off by, the governess.

The abrupt arrival at, and still more abrupt departure of these well-known personages from, Florence, was the subject of every conversation, and the nine days' wonder of us all, though no one could tell why or wherefore it happened: till a friend of ours, who knew the whole case, arrived from Bologna, and I leave you to judge what a sensation the adventure then made.

Our capital could furnish many an extraordinary tale, but this escapade reduced village scandal to insignificance. The ladies most in vogue, or rather those whose characters were most compromised, regretted that there was no handsome tutor in the family, and the gentlemen who were the most notorious, lamented that deluded governesses were not more plentiful.

Governesses became in demand, but the only article that was placed, that is to say "married,"

found that she had been taken in by a pretended scion of a noble family, whose name he assumed; and who has since figured for certain misdeeds in a prison list. As to tutors, they remained still below par, and the last quotation I saw, was "a large stock in the market, and very heavy on hand."

In conclusion, I have to confess, that though this story is literally true, so far as the criminal parties are concerned, I have changed the scene of action from its strict *locale*, to Bologna and Florence, and altered the titles, in order that a personal scandal may be avoided: The adventure occurred on the northern frontier of Italy, and of course it was much talked of in every place where British residents were found, and if I have fixed the *venue* in the Tuscan metropolis, it is because stranger tales are current within its walls, and great crimes of this nature are there considered as venial offences.

I learned, likewise, at Florence, to comprehend the utter baseness of the ultra-radicals, and to doubt the pretensions of the supposed constitutional advocates. I found the one sunk to the lowest place in general estimation, and the other with difficulty enabled to keep their heads above water.

As I expressed it in a public letter to the "Times,"—"I became cured in this capital of an over-violent Liberal fever;" and it was here I prepared myself to understand the great terror which prevailed in other parts of the Peninsula,

at the progress which revolution was making in Tuscany and in Liguria.

Still as I had nothing very important to describe, the agitation having temporarily been subdued, I determined on continuing my original plan, and visiting Rome and Naples. I went first to Naples and Sicily, and then I joined the French army before Rome; but I will not describe either my political, military, or social adventures at those places, at present, as I reserve them for a second series of Italian campaigns, should the public relish these two volumes.

I mean to do so without recurring even for a single line to my correspondence in the "Times," as I aim, not at illustrating political events which have long since lost their interest, but at showing in what manner the course of newspaper life is conducted; and how full of enjoyment a profession may be, with which the world is so little acquainted.

I arrived in Naples with letters of no political consideration, yet before I was one whole day there, I sent home all the correspondence that had passed between the Sicilian Cabinet, the Minister of France, and the Chargé d'Affairës of England, without the prime minister or any member of the government having participation in the fact; and though I landed at Civita Vecchia not known to a single person in the French army, I contrived to win, with the same speed, the confidence of General Oudinot, and to obtain permission to witness from his quarters

at the Villa Santucci, the whole operations of the siege.

As these important cases did not occupy all my time, and as the love of adventure is inherent in wild Irishmen, of course I profited as much as I could by the many opportunities that occurred of gaining experience of men and manners. *Prima donnas* and *prima ballerinas* abound in Naples and Rome, as well as at Turin and Milan; and original characters, such as Sister Agatha, the Novice of Frescati, and the Bishop of California or New Holland, may serve to illustrate my diary.

What I want the public to understand is, that the campaigns which I now write are not taken from newspaper correspondence, and that I draw from memory alone, and not from any other source. I might compose a political narrative, as well as disclose matters useful or prejudicial to the public service, but I know that the general reader detests such solemn undertakings, even if I had talent or power to execute them.

Unfortunately I have lived behind the scenes, and know too well how state policy is carried on, and how state papers are drawn up—and as within the curtain of a theatre all scenic illusion is lost, so I am sorry to say the interior of the diplomatic world is reduced to homely common-place dimensions with me; and when I hear prime ministers extolled for the great capacity they exhibited on such an occasion, I laugh heartily as I remember by whom the

combination was arranged, or by whose pen the all-important document was composed.

Even the Duke of Wellington is "not a hero to his *valet de chambre*;" and with one or two exceptions, I could not name a prime minister with whom I "transacted business," who was not a mere cypher ere the matter on which I saw him was concluded.

In former days great men were seen towering above their fellows, but education is now so general, that equality is produced, not by reducing the great, but by elevating the whole public to the same standard. Junius in our days would be a second-class writer, not lively enough even for a police-office; and there is more real talent in the editors' and parliamentary reporters' room of a morning paper, than would have gained immortality half a century ago. Addison would at this hour be set down as an old twaddler; Steele only as a smart man; Johnson as a great bombastic bore; and Swift alone deemed worthy of a first-class engagement. Sterne would have shrunk before the quick and quaint humour of Mr. Wight, once the Bow-street reporter, and subsequently editor of the "Morning Herald;" and can Fielding's or Smollett's happiest moments, surpass the original variety and creative fancy of Dickens; or the profound analysis of human nature, and sarcastic dissection of men's motives by Thackeray.

As it is in the literary world, so it falls out in political life; giants are rare because there are no

dwarfs; and when a man of first-rate abilities is called on to play a part, his mind is repressed by the conviction that others of the same force are there to judge him, and he abstains from saying or doing things on which his predecessors of the last century would have built everlasting fame.

It is thus I beg leave to explain, why persons even as unpretending as myself, are called in these days to mix in matters, which, in the olden time, they would not have been deemed worthy of touching; and it is thus I would make the public understand what a large sack of materials I travel with, should they require an additional supply.

As long as I was bound by newspaper engagements, I could not write on my own account, or publish in another channel. Now, for the first time for five-and-twenty years, I am a free man, and if the reading world condescend to accept my humble contributions in another series of campaigns, I can only say that I am ready to begin.

I have also another explanation to give, or excuse to make, if the reader be not fatigued, and that is, should I betray a great ignorance of the public taste, or of the opinions now prevalent at home, it must be attributed to the fact, that I have been absent from "Lunnun town" for many many years; and that I am writing for readers as they then were, supposing they are still the same.

I know I shall be laughed at for absurd mistakes, or illustrations not applicable to the present times,

but I ask you to pity the errors of a forlorn wanderer in the political highways and bye-ways of Europe, Asia, and America, who has nothing of country about him but his brogue, or anything worth commending in what he says, but a strong desire to please, or a devil-may-care sort of manner, which has more than once served his purpose.

CHAPTER XXV.

LAST WORDS.

"GOOD-BYE, dear madam; 'Our Own Correspondent' takes leave, thanking you for the honour you have done him in thus far accompanying his eccentric rambles, and hoping that, ere long, he will have the pleasure of seeing you again."

"Most excellent sir, life is short, and you are not over young, and however flattering your wish may be, I prefer having my curiosity on a particular point gratified at present, than to wait for an indefinite period."

"What point, dear madam? I have not the most remote idea of what you allude to."

"The fact is, dear sir, when describing how you contrived to get a bed at Folkestone, by the ingenious device of the Irish porter, who induced the village doctor to believe that a noble lord wanted his professional assistance; and when you applied to *Il medico Ercole* at Valleggio, in whose house you were domesticated for three months, you hinted

that you had another case which occurred at Toeplitz in reserve, to illustrate your doctrine that every stranger at a loss in a foreign place will find a kind friend, and a useful *aide-de-camp* in the resident physician. Now, sir, as my brother has just walked the hospitals, and has taken a house in Belgravia, I am very anxious to learn what that particular case was, as you know full well that medical success does not depend on positive skill, so much as on a knowledge of the weak points of human nature, and on being able to turn the ignorance or caprices of the rich to account."

"Madam, you forget that it was not the patient, in the case referred to, who was turned to account, but the Doctor, and therefore a description of it cannot advance your learned brother's practice."

"Still, sir, it may be useful to him, and I insist on hearing it; you an Irishman and refuse a lady! you a man of the world and hesitate to gratify a woman's curiosity!"

"Madam, if you take that ground, you know I am at your orders; I only fear that the story is out of place, and that here it will neither amuse you nor any of your friends."

"I am all impatience, sir. Let me hear it if you please."

In the year of grace 1836, the Emperor of Austria invited the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and in fact, all the sovereigns of Europe, save those of England and France, to a grand

festival of one fortnight duration at the celebrated baths of Toeplitz in Bohemia.

The congress, as it was called, though nominally festive, was in reality political; as though the Austrian cabinet proclaimed that the only object in view was to do honour to the crowned heads in its intimate alliance, those in the secret knew that it was called together at the desire of the Emperor Nicholas, for the purpose of considering what steps should be taken by the northern powers, in answer to the quadruple treaty made between England, France, Spain, and Portugal, for the expulsion from the Peninsula of Don Carlos and Dom Miguel, and whether or not armed and pecuniary assistance should be given to Don Carlos, who was then dominant in the Basque Provinces.

Toeplitz was selected, because to it annually for three months, the late King of Prussia came, because the Emperor of Russia was partial to the baths, and above all, the real purpose of the meeting could be better there concealed, than if a capital or otherwise important place had been fixed upon.

I will not here enter into all the details of the conference, of which I was daily, and almost hour by hour informed; I need only say, that though the Emperor Nicholas urged in his most vehement manner, the propriety of publicly aiding the royalist cause, endangered by the revolution of 1830 in France, the defeat of Dom Miguel in Portugal, and the failure of Don Carlos in Spain, the sober good sense

of the King of Prussia, and the acute and clear reasoning of Prince Metternich, on behalf of Austria, prevailed, and on the fourth day it was decided, that no intervention should take place, and that pecuniary assistance, which the Czar undertook to furnish, should alone be given.

At this period I was the correspondent of the "Morning Herald" at Madrid, and you may judge my astonishment, when one morning, only eight days previous to the opening of the congress, I received a positive order to attend it.

In the first place I did not know where Toeplitz was, and in the next, when I did trace it to Bohemia, I discovered that by the ordinary conveyances, and making the greatest haste, it would take me, as no railways then existed, at least fifteen days and nights. I swore in set terms at the ignorance of the editor, poor fellow, since numbered with the dead, who sent such orders; but as in those days I was fond of attempting what others called "physical impossibilities," I took the liberty to call on Mr. Villiers, now the Earl of Clarendon, who directed British policy at Madrid, and who, with one exception, treated me with the greatest kindness.

I showed his Excellency my letters, and asked him for advice, and he, entering fully into all the difficulties, and finding I was determined to make the attempt, gave me permission to accompany a Cabinet Messenger, who was most opportunely to start the same night for Paris.

One-half the journey was thus considerably abridged, so far as time was concerned, and by dint of whipping-and spurring, and travelling night and day, I arrived on the Saturday before the official opening of the congress, fixed to take place on Monday, and when out of all the royal personages to be collected, the King of Prussia only had arrived.

Before I left Madrid, the Austrian agent there promised to write to his brother, who was one of the leading clerks in the Imperial Cabinet, a few words in my favour, and I took means to let Baron Capelle, the well-known Minister of Charles X., then in London, be informed of my plans, and to ask him for letters of introduction to his old official associates and ministerial colleagues.

The Baron, one of my kindest and best friends, sent the letters I desired: but as he confided them to a private hand, and not to the post, I did not receive them in due time, and as the Austrian Secretary had not yet appeared, I was set down in the Baths of Toeplitz, without being known to one solitary individual, and unable to speak a word of German—the worst feature in the case.

As newspaper correspondence admits of no delay, it was necessary that I should at once begin to write. I was ignorant of the language, unacquainted with the people, and absolutely without the means of getting the least grain of information, and I leave you, madam, to judge what the feelings of a

correspondent were, who had never failed in any of his undertakings, and who saw disgrace and dishonour staring him in the face.

However, as I was not a man to give way to despair, or to sink without an effort to keep my head above water, I sat down, tired and weary as I was, to ruminate, and ere many minutes elapsed, I had formed a plan of operations, which succeeded in the happiest manner.

If, in that year, you were a reader of the "Morning Herald," you will remember that the Toeplitz correspondence produced a great sensation, and that people wondered how such accurate information on state matters could be procured. The public did not know in what a simple manner a great *coup* was effected, or by what unusual means an entrance to the vast domain of Imperial diplomacy was obtained.

"Pray, landlord, have you a physician of well-known skill at Toeplitz, one who has what I call a European celebrity?"

"Sir, there is Dr. Graff, one of the first men Germany possesses, and to him in some degree the high estimation in which our baths are held is owing. He has published a great work on the Toeplitz waters, which has been translated into French, English, and Italian, and as he speaks all three languages, he is the only doctor consulted by strangers. It is at his mansion that the King of Prussia always takes up his quarters. Indeed he is

the confidential friend, more than the medical adviser of his Majesty, and he knows more about the congress than even the ministers of state."

"Oh! landlord, I am very ill, those horrid cramps are seizing me again. I must go to bed, pray send for Dr. Graff without a moment's delay."

"Good Heavens, sir, what is the matter? you are looking very ill, and appear to suffer great pain."

"Send for the doctor, landlord! oh, oh!"

I popped into my bed, and in the course of a few minutes the illustrious physician was by its side, delighted to have found an English patient, and calculating the difference between the ordinary German fee of one thaler, and the gold napoleon which we *Britishers* are expected to give; moreover the learned man was not a little anxious to display to a stranger his acquirements in English and French, and as he spoke the former language with great fluency, our conversation was carried on in it.

"I am sorry, sir, to hear you are so ill; the waiter said you were suffering severely, but how do you feel now? Let me feel your pulse! show me your tongue; what is the matter with you? are you in pain at present?"

"Doctor, I am much better, the cramps have ceased for the moment, but they may seize me again whilst you are here. May I beg leave to ask, before I have the honour to consult you professionally, if you are the celebrated Doctor Graff who has written on the Toeplitz waters, as it is to see that eminent

man I have come to the baths! I beg your pardon, sir, but there may be two physicians of the same name, and I believe Graff is claimed by many in Bohemia; the Doctor Graff I allude to, is the intimate friend and professional adviser of the King of Prussia."

"I have the honour to be in attendance on his Majesty."

"You are then that great man whose works have been translated into English, French, and Italian! Sir Astley Cooper and Dr. Arnott have frequently mentioned your name to me; indeed it is by advice of the latter that I am here."

The Doctor (trying to look modest): "I am glad to hear that my humble labours are appreciated by such great men!"

"Humble labours! Why if you will permit me to say so, your fame is European, and in no part of the world are you more highly estimated than with us!"

"Sir, you overpower me with kindness, but as I am the medical adviser you seek, had you not better let me see what your complaint is, and what our waters can do for you. To be plain, you look in perfect health, though you are a little fatigued and overheated by the journey."

"Oh, dear Doctor, appearances are deceitful, and those horrid cramps in the stomach do not affect my general health, thank Providence, though they give me exquisite pain at times."

"Will you allow me? a little magnesia will do no

harm—your lungs are sound—nothing is wrong here—I should think your appetite is good, and digestion that of an ostrich."

"I only complain, dear Doctor, of occasional cramps in the stomach—my grandfather had them—my father was a martyr to them—and I fear it is a family complaint, but the extraordinary circumstance is, that months pass without their once appearing, whilst at other periods they come on three or four times in the course of the same day!"

"This indeed is a most extraordinary case!"

"I have been to Bath, Buxton, and Cheltenham; and this spring I tried the baths of Lucca; but a radical cure I cannot find, till Dr. Arnott, who is our family physician, on reading your last work, called on me about a fortnight since, and recommended me to start at once for Toeplitz. 'If there be waters in Europe,' said Arnott, 'that suit your case, those celebrated baths are what we want; and if there be a medical man who can cure you, it is the writer of this book!'"

"Oh, sir, you overpower me; I fear Dr. Arnott, with whose high reputation I am well acquainted, overrates my skill; you are not in pain—in truth I never saw a more healthy subject in my life."

"The plain fact is, my dear sir, I am about asking you to make a great sacrifice of time in my favour, for which of course I will ever entertain the most lively gratitude. I wish you to give me one quarter of an hour every morning, and if the cramps come

on whilst you are present, you will then understand their nature, and if they should not you will advise me generally what I should do."

"It is difficult to find time, but I can refuse nothing to the friend of my learned colleague."

"Such an attack as I had this morning is the prelude to others of a more serious nature, and I am anxious, should they come on, that you should be present, and determine from what source they proceed, and how they can best be remedied."

"Well, sir, we must do all we can."

"I will not detain you further, Dr. Graff, but I should be very much obliged if you can look in again to day about four o'clock, after you have disposed of your other patients."

I placed a double gold napoleon in the physician's willing palm,—about eight times the amount of the usual fee, and four times more than he expected, even from a John Bull,—so I saw that he set me down as Lord Mayor of London, or a royal duke travelling *incog.*, or a modern Crœsus with cramp in his stomach, and a gold fever in his pocket.

I did not say one word about the King of Prussia, or the congress, or allow the least suspicion to arise respecting my real motives; but I calculated that if the excellent doctor spent a certain time with me every day, he would be compelled, for want of other topics, to turn to that which engaged every one's attention at the baths, and chatter about the imperial and royal Majesties, and all that concerned them.

I would have given fifty guineas for information at the moment, as the "Morning Herald" treasury was ever liberal to me, so that I saved three-fourths or four-fifths of the sum at least, the doctor's fees not being likely to outpass some ten or fifteen gold coins.

Dr. Graff repeated his visit at four o'clock, and pressed my hand most cordially, inquired how I felt, and was both sorry and pleased that the cramp had not returned.

As I hinted that I expected his visit should be prolonged for the time I named, the doctor, finding that no spasms were coming on, began to speak of other matters; and as several carriages drove up to the hotel door at the moment, I asked him, with the most innocent face in the world, if Toeplitz was always so gay, and where so many strangers were to be accommodated.

The good doctor was quite surprised that I had heard nothing of the congress, and forthwith plunging into that fertile and productive topic, he told who and what the personages expected were, what the nominal and secret object of the meeting was, illustrating all he said by references to his illustrious guest, the King of Prussia.

In this way we talked for half, not a quarter of an hour, and then the dear doctor took his leave, the dose of the double napoleon being repeated, and a promise given that he would see me again next morning at ten.

I have no doubt the learned professor set me down as a half-crazed Englishman, with more money in his pocket than wit in his head, at the same time making up his mind that if gold was so easily spent, he need not refuse to take a doctor's share.

No sooner had the doctor's carriage cleared the court-yard, than out of bed I jumped, sat down to my writing-desk, and out of his conversation composed more than one opening letter, in which I took care to say nothing that could compromise him, or reveal the source from whence my information came. I made out duplicates, one copy being sent to our agent at Paris, the other to a friend at Hamburgh, who would, I knew, forward it by the London steamer.

The next day the excellent medical adviser came, and in the same manner unwittingly supplied me with fresh matter; and as I procured a cicerone at the same time who knew all the great people and their titles, I felt myself as much at home in forty-eight hours, as if I had lived the whole season at Toeplitz.

A French milliner who had brought the last fashions for the Empress, rendered me also considerable aid in the minor details of gossip, so much loved by London readers; and as the secretary from Vienna arrived with Prince Metternich early in the week, in fact on the Monday on which the congress officially opened, I had a mass of materials before me out of which a good correspondent might write letters for a month.

It was thus, dear madam, that, on three important occasions in my campaigns, medical aid rendered me most valuable service; and if it should be my fate to visit Siberia, or Lapland, or the Isle of Man, I will,—if at a loss for a dinner and a bed, or anxious to ascertain how many prisoners are in the mines, how many feet of snow fell in the last week, or explore the strange history of the "House of Keys," —I will apply to the resident physician, satisfied that I shall learn from him all I desire to know.

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